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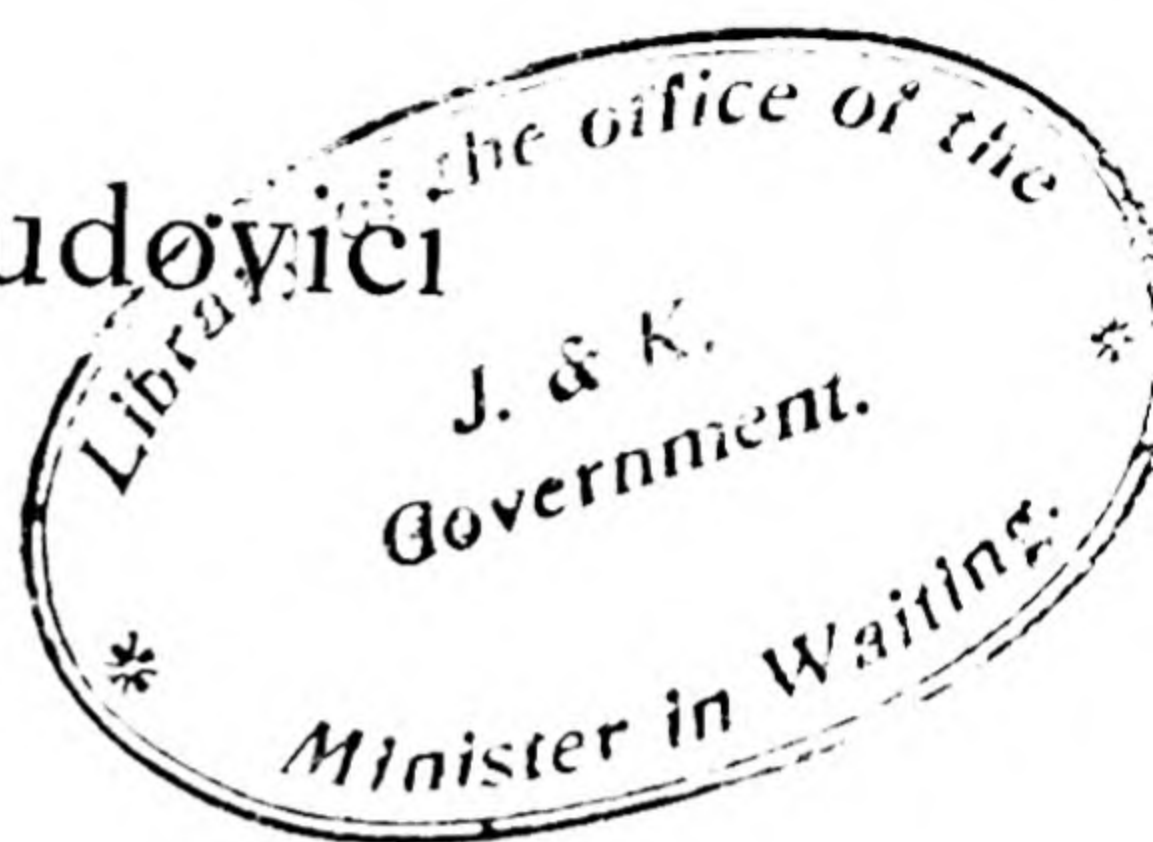
The False Assumptions of Democracy

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A DEFENCE OF CONSERVATISM

A FURTHER TEXT-BOOK FOR TORIES

By
Anthony M. Ludovici



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P R E F A C E

IN my *Defence of Aristocracy* I endeavoured to state the case for aristocratic government against popular or democratic control. In my *False Assumptions of Democracy* I attempted to show the speciousness of the philosophy behind democratic ideas and the liberal attitude in general. And, in the present work my object has been to reveal Conservatism not only as a policy of preservation, but of discernment in change. Both in my criticism of Conservatism in the past, and in my outline of a Conservative philosophy of the future, I have argued from the standpoint that true Conservatism should preserve not only by the obstructive principle of 'no change', which may at times amount to stagnation and mere negativism, but also by the progressive and positive principle of refusing to introduce anything new, except when it is capable of permanence, that is to say when it is consistent with the eternal laws either of nature or of human nature.

The rôle of the Conservative politician, as defined in these chapters, thus reveals itself as a very difficult and complicated one, in which much native wisdom and taste has to combine with a generous endowment of realism and humanity, in order successfully to oppose the romantic forces of disintegration and disorder. With the delusive banner of 'Progress' at their head, these latter forces aim constantly at inaugurating mere change, without ever giving a thought to the direction in which change is moving—whether towards decomposition or higher organisa-

tion; and it is my hope that, in distinctly defining the function of Conservatism as the exercising of discernment in change, I have been able to reveal Conservative politics as the only force in the nation which is able to resist national decomposition and maintain a critical attitude towards every stage by which this end is being compassed by dreamers and fantasists.

This does not pretend to be a historical treatise. History enters only as a means of supplying illustrations to the general argument. And if it may appear that I have treated with excessive elaboration the history of certain phases of the national life, and of the legislation relating to them, I can only plead that my object was less to impart historical information than to bring unmistakably and graphically before the reader what is meant in these pages by a true Conservative policy. The whole of Chapters III and IV, therefore, in which I confine my attention to such matters as the legislation regarding the National Health, National Food, National Education, the Jews, Aliens, Immigration, and Factories, must be regarded more as a convenient method of describing an ideal of Conservatism in practice, than as a historical narrative; and the subjects chosen recommended themselves to me very much more on account of their natural claim on the attention of Conservatives, than on account of the importance usually ascribed to them by historians and political writers.

London,
May 28th, 1926

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI

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Chapter I

THE MEANING OF CONSERVATISM

IN most political and religious discussions the terminology employed has a popular as well as a scientific meaning. In religion this distinction is usually indicated by the two words, exoteric and esoteric. And while the former relates to what may be and is known by the people, the latter relates to what is secret and belongs to the 'inside' knowledge of a priesthood.

The political term, 'Conservatism', belongs to this group of expressions that have different meanings according to the qualifications of him who uses them. It has a popular or exoteric, and an exclusive or esoteric meaning. And it will be possible to show in these pages that it is because the popular connotation of Conservatism has become the universal connotation, that modern Conservatism, as a political position, has been unsatisfactory.

Man is instinctively conservative in the sense that probably millions of years of experience have taught him that a stable environment is the best for peace of mind, present and future security, automatism of action (that action which requires least thought), and a ready command of material and artificial circumstances. It is the genial innovator, or the lunatic, who disturbs peace of mind by introducing an unaccustomed and unaccountable element into life. It is the dislocation of economic conditions that makes the present and future doubtful. It is the repeated introduction of new instruments, new weapons, new methods, and needs for fresh adaptations, that makes

automatism impossible. And it is the complication of life by novel contributions to life's interests and duties that makes a ready command of circumstances difficult.

The influences which make mankind instinctively conservative are, therefore, the love of safety, the tendency to indolence, and the preference for the known before the unknown.

In this sense conservatism is of enormous value; because it is only in a stable environment that the slow work of heredity can build up family qualities, group virtues, national character, and racial characteristics. And if these things are desirable, a stable environment and consequently conservatism are desirable.

But the popular mind knows nothing of the need of a stable environment lasting for many generations, for the building up of character, capacity, virtue and prejudice. It knows only that it loves stability, because reckoning is impossible without it. And there is perhaps no country more fond of stability than England. Indeed, so intense in England is the attachment to what is known and established, that it is perhaps the only country in Europe where it is still possible to cause people to titter and laugh in the open street by talking a strange language fluently in their presence, or by wearing peculiar clothes. And this has long been so. Pepys noticed it. French and German visitors have noticed it in the past and recently, and anybody can observe it for himself in any thoroughfare in any town in the land.

Perhaps England's greatness is due in a large measure to this trait among her people. Because, since it points to a long habituation through many generations to the same conditions it also points to character, capacity and virtue.

As Reibmayr has so ably shown, it is in islands like Crete, Japan, and Britain, in peninsulas like Greece and Italy, and in naturally or artificially enclosed lands like Mesopotamia, China and Peru, that great peoples and great cultures have tended to arise, partly because of the greater stability of environment that can be secured in such territories.¹ The formation of an ethnic whole out of a confusion or mixture of races, and the building up of character and strong national traits, require just such an environment as these countries were able to provide for many hundreds of years. Constant change, and interference from strangers, are prevented by natural or artificial barriers, while the habituation to similar circumstances, which is usually accompanied by an absence of mixed breeding with foreigners, secures precisely the requisite conditions for the formation of an original and powerful national outlook and temperament.

But these conditions themselves necessarily create in the people that suffer their influence a more than usually strong tendency to conservatism, and that is why we find in the early history of Egypt, Greece and Rome, and in the recent history of China, Japan and England, a marked dislike of the foreigner and of anything foreign or new.

Facilities of travel and the conditions enforced by commerce and industry, ultimately break down this national quality of island and peninsular folk. People—so the saying is—become ‘broad-minded’. But

¹ Even in the life of the individual it must be plain that proficiency, great ability, and great achievement also depend upon stability of environment lasting over a long period. What, indeed, do we do when we want our sons to be great at art, medicine, or law? We place them in an environment where the stability of artistic, medical or legal interests is secured, and we keep them there as long as we can, until out of their own acquired capacity and concentration they remain permanently adapted.

it should never be forgotten that this alleged virtue of 'broad-mindedness' is secured at the cost of ethnic integration and national character, and while it denotes a loss of conservatism, it also signifies a loss of strength. When, moreover, it is coupled, as it is to-day, with diffuse miscegenation, or the most complete confusion of nations, races, family lines, trade and other traditions, in marriage, we must expect to find what we actually see—i.e. not only the insular conservatism of the modern man diminishing by leaps and bounds, but also his character and will power. We cannot have it both ways.

All nations that have ever achieved anything great, have displayed that excess of conservatism over the instinctive conservatism of the rest of mankind, which is to be seen in the history of the peoples that have been mentioned above, and they have displayed this excessive conservatism before and at the time of their greatest strength. Broad-mindedness, love of change, liberal ideas, and the decay of the distinction between *we* and *they* (*we* being *the* nation, and *they* being all other nations), while they have heralded democracy, have also invariably heralded incipient weakness and decline. Such, however, is the strength imparted by an old conservative tradition, that long after conservatism has begun to decline, the people it has reared often continue for some time in strength and mastery. It is, however, only a matter of years. For when once the source of national strength—national character, capacity and virtue—becomes dried up, the end cannot be far distant.

It is perhaps doubtful whether the English people have yet been sufficiently debauched, either by travel, miscegenation, or constant change and familiarity with foreigners, to lose all that valuable excess of conservatism which perforce characterised them as

island folk, and hitherto differentiated them most completely from the rest of Europe; and it is probably correct to regard them still as the most conservative people of Europe. But we should not forget that the qualities created through the sameness of conditions lasting over generations, are much more easily dissipated than they are built up, and therefore, that modern England may be considered as at all events threatened with decline.

The present generation of men, having no knowledge of the necessity of psychological compensations, imagine that the loss of so-called 'insular' prejudices and opinions, and the decline of hidebound conservatism in recent years, are all for the good. They overlook the fact that the insular prejudice itself, like the hidebound conservatism of Englishmen, was merely one face of the medal, on the obverse of which there probably stood every quality that has made England successful and formidable in the past. Among these qualities we must certainly reckon character and will power, and we are therefore justified in suspecting that with the decline of insularity other valuable attributes have suffered depreciation. This, however, is by the way.

Now, in the popular mind, the instinctive conservatism we have been discussing, together with its excess where this is present, becomes transferred to the world of politics very much in the same form as it assumes in everyday life—i.e., merely as a policy of no change. Long before Conservatism, as a term, stood for the name of a political party, conservatism had operated as an influence in English politics, just as it does in the politics of every other nation. And it would have remained the principal influence in English politics if the people of England themselves had remained happy and beautiful—because happiness

and beauty insist on no change. When, however, a section of the political world actually began to call themselves Conservatives, as they did in 1830, the policy of such a party was assumed by the masses to be one of 'no change', in sympathy with their own instinctive impulses of conservatism, and no other meaning was given to it.

We may take it then that the exoteric meaning of political conservatism is only this. We do not thereby wish to imply that it is either wise or rational for statesmen to accept it or to practise it in this exoteric form. All we suggest for the present is that, popularly, political conservatism has this connotation. And that is why, where the *opposing forces are not strong*, conservatism in politics always commands a large amount of favour, because it appeals to that tendency which is common to all men, irrespective of nationality, and which is particularly strong in those whose geographical position has promoted national integration to a marked degree.

'Where the opposing forces are not strong.' What is the meaning of this phrase?

In all national life, as in the life of Nature, there are two forces which constantly conflict with the inclination of all creatures to prefer stability before instability in their environment. These two forces are, first, the renewal of the whole of the nation's personnel, or the redistribution of all national rôles with each fresh generation, and all that this means in novelty of outlook and situation; and secondly, the chafing of certain sections of the nation under circumstances which make adaptation (contentment) impossible.¹ The first of these forces tends to introduce

¹ There is besides a third force outside the nation which also conflicts with stability, a sort of *vis major* from beyond a nation's frontiers, which impels, or threatens to impel, change against the

change by means of peaceful innovations, frequently merely local in their inception, because the new arrivals representing this force are either above or below the standard required by the stable environment; and the second of these forces tends to introduce change by means of individual or group revolt, because the creatures representing this force are unhappy.

To both of the classes representing these two forces, change, instead of being hated and dreaded, comes to be regarded for a while as the most coveted of blessings, for which men are prepared to strive as earnestly as they once strove for stability. But since this is only a temporary striving, pending more successful adaptation, it should not be forgotten that even their anti-conservatism must swing back to conservatism when once the object of their clamour is achieved. In this sense, even Communists who have successfully established the conditions they desire, necessarily return to conservatism and begin again to resist change, provided always that they are actuated in their agitation by loyalty to their nation and are not merely compassing their nation's doom of malice prepense. Thus, in the violent measures adopted by the Communists of Russia against counter-revolutionary propaganda and movements, we see the natural conservatism of man reappearing after the forces which have made for change have achieved their new adaptations.

In humanity, therefore, as in the rest of the animal kingdom, there is no such phenomenon as permanent anti-conservatism. There are only sporadic and nation's will. This is the kind of change most bitterly resented because it does not necessarily meet any internal need. But it will not be necessary to discuss it at present. Examples of its action are to be seen in the sudden invasion of Peru and Mexico by the Spaniards, and in the appearance of the Boers and ourselves among the Bushmen and Zulus of Africa, etc.

periodical outbreaks of anti-conservatism, which can be traced to well known causes, all of which within a nation, do not necessarily constitute a valid claim for change. *The validity of the claim for change turns on the question of quality.* This is important, although it sounds only an obvious truism. At all events it is a truism that appears to have been overlooked by many writers on politics, including Burke, Disraeli, and Lord Hugh Cecil, and is therefore worthy of some emphasis. These writers often speak as if within each nation there were two kinds of minds—those desiring what they call ‘progress’, and those desiring what they are pleased to term ‘stagnation’. This distinction is misleading. There are no such classes of humanity in any nation, or at all events no such classes which may be distinguished by this difference of mental attitude. There are certainly those, as we have seen, who, though normally conservative at heart, temporarily desire change, because they are either above or below the standards established; and those who though normally conservative at heart temporarily desire change because they are unhappy. But these three groups are not differentiated from the rest of the nation by a ‘progressive’ or ‘emancipated’ attitude of mind which is opposed to stagnation. Even to whisper such a belief about them is to import error into the discussion from the start. They are merely different from the rest in demanding modifications quite frequently regressive, before they settle down, whereas the rest settle down without making these demands.

Unfortunately, however, since the war waged by the temporary advocates of ‘change’ usually receives such euphemistic and gratuitously false titles as ‘the fight for progress’ or ‘the struggle for human advancement’ or ‘the battle for light’, a moral quality

is imparted to their endeavours, which often paralyses or disarms those who resist their proposals as vicious.

On close analysis it is easily seen that only a very small section of any nation has at any time the right to clamour for change as 'progress', and that consists of those who, having come into the world with qualities which make them superior to the standards expected by the stable environment, may have an interest in raising those standards. All the rest of the clamour for change, far from meaning progress, may mean nothing more than a reduction or corruption of established institutions. Truth to tell, this is precisely what a large amount of recent change has amounted to, because modern mankind never stops to ask whether the desire for change comes from people who are beneath or above existing institutions and standards.

As I do not find this point discussed in political works, it may be as well to go over it again with the view of making it quite clear.

It has been said that there are two forces in national life, which constantly conflict with humanity's natural and deeply rooted predilection in favour of a stable environment. They are: (a) the renewal of the nation's personnel with each fresh generation, with all the incalculable novelties that human nature is capable of; and (b) the chafing of certain sections of the nation under uncongenial circumstances. Each of these forces, however, is represented by two very distinct classes of men.

(a) The newcomers, with their possible new outlook and new gifts, may be either beneath or above the standard expected by the stable environment, and may therefore be *subnormal* or *supernormal*. Not every man is superior to his parents. The greatest number are either faithful repetitions or variations

on the same plane. In a degenerate age, the chances are that children will be inferior to their parents. But when the subnormal and the supernormal join in a clamour for change, they obviously do so from very different motives; and if they both succeed, achieve totally different results. Only the supernormal, however—i.e., the smallest section, and a constantly dwindling section in a degenerate age—have any right to claim that their innovations are in any way progressive, even if they are desirable. The changes demanded by the greatest number—the subnormal—must necessarily be regressive.

(*b*) Likewise among those who are so very unhappy that they prefer change of any kind before a continuance of their suffering, there are these two important divisions: those who suffer because of unwise conditions imposed upon them by inconsiderate rulers, and those who suffer from themselves, because of their physical and psychical inferiority. It is obvious that only the claim of the former for change can possibly be desirable, because it must always be right and progressive to remove or to redress just grievances. But the claims of the latter for change, may and frequently do mean merely spite, misanthropy, the wish to punish their generation for congenital ills which only a miracle could assuage; and they should therefore be resisted.

So we have four sections of the nation constantly labouring temporarily against the rest of humanity's and their own instinctive love of stability, though only two of them have any right to be heard.

Unfortunately, particularly in a degenerate age, the others who have no right to be heard, far outnumber those who have, and it is precisely these others who are most eager to claim the title 'progress' for the modifications they propose. Moreover, in these

vote-catching days, politicians cannot afford to ignore this multitude of anti-conservatives, who are so *from beneath*, and the consequence is that change, morbid change, has become almost a national habit. Under the misleading title of 'progress' it plays havoc with the nation's institutions and standards for the benefit of the subnormal, and politics have become merely a means of realising it.

When, therefore, Lord Hugh Cecil writes: 'The restraints of conservatism are the indispensable condition of the security and efficiency of progress . . . a brake necessary to safety. . . . Progress depends on conservatism to make it intelligent, efficient and appropriate to circumstances'; when, moreover, he writes: 'The prudence of conservatism must control the zeal for advance or evil will come of it,'¹ he yields too much and claims too little. To place 'progress' in opposition to conservatism in this way is to lead to misunderstanding. Lord Hugh Cecil may be as clear as I am about the misconceptions associated with the idea of progress, but I question whether in his book he has adopted any safeguards against spreading the errors with which the idea of progress is encrusted. Conservatism is not a brake on progress. To speak like this is to surrender yourself to the enemy. Conservatism is a brake on indiscriminate change. Progress does not depend on conservatism to make it intelligent, efficient, etc. Change depends in this way on conservatism. The prudence of conservatism must not control the zeal for advance. The zeal for advance is heroic and, like all heroic manifestations, extremely rare. Conservatism must control the zeal for change. To imply as this writer does that the mere desire for change is synonymous with the 'zeal for advance' is to exalt very far above

¹ See *Conservatism*. (Williams & Norgate, 1912.) Chapter I.

their proper rank hundreds of thousands of present day and past agitators, whose clamour for change offers about as much hope of 'advance' as does the clamour for the steward raised by a crowd of sea-sick travellers. But Lord Hugh Cecil is not alone in this weakness, and in this surrender of his position to the bitterest critics of conservatism. Even Burke is never quite clear regarding the difference between the temporary and unthinking desire for change, which is as common as dust, and the genial and creative zeal for advance, which is rare and valuable.

He is constantly reminding us of the need to look back to our ancestors if we wish to look forward to posterity; he acknowledges that without the means for some change, a state is 'without the means of its conservation', and he speaks of the desirability of always acting as if in the presence of our 'canonised forefathers'.¹ But all this sounds too much like our old and popular friend, Conservatism, *qua* 'caution' and 'no change', to help us in our conflict with alleged 'progressive' opponents. He never distinguishes sharply between a desire for mere change, which may come from the most undesirable elements in the nation, and the creative innovations of the supernormal, which alone constitute a nation's progress. And as he does not make this distinction he naturally fails in defining the duties of those who, in their political activities, strive for conservatism.

It is, however, the function of Conservatives as a political body constantly to discover and to be guided by this distinction. And here we come to the esoteric connotation of Conservatism, which, far from being merely an attitude of caution or obstruction in the way of all change—which, as we have seen, is its popular and exoteric connotation—is an attitude of

¹ See *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

protection against those changes which are merely disintegrating.

All change, as we have seen, antagonises a very deep instinct of mankind. But all change is not therefore bad. The mistake is to allow that all change is necessarily progress. And it is the lofty mission of Conservatism—no other political party has ever recognised the need of such a function—to prevent national changes from degenerating into a process of general decomposition.

Owing to the popular conception of Conservatism having become the general one, Conservatives are now associated in the minds of the majority with a policy of pure obstruction. And Conservative politicians themselves, by constantly reiterating the need of looking back and of cautiously weighing the old with the new, lend a colourable warrant to this misconception. They are frequently content to claim (and this is their most enlightened claim) that Conservative policy consists in preserving the lessons of the past. But it is, as we shall see, very much more than that.

Conservative writers and politicians have, on the whole, been much more prone to advertise Conservatism in its exoteric connotation, and have thereby greatly facilitated the task of their opponents. Nothing is easier than to condemn a group who stand for 'caution' or 'no change', when the wail of countless sufferers demands change at all costs. Thus the British method of carrying on government by means of opposing parties—Liberal and Conservative, or Labour and Conservative—has been called an ideal method, because it has been gratuitously assumed that the Liberals and Labourites are wholly progressive, and that the Conservatives, who are wholly for 'caution' or for 'no change', act as a salutary counter-weight or check to their opponents' frequently

'too advanced' proposals.¹ Nothing, however, could be more false than this picture of party government. It amounts to a pure superstition. Unfortunately, however, when the further superstition about an alleged continuous 'progress' becomes popularized, the first superstition about party government is likely to acquire a fast hold on the minds of the people, and Conservatism is naturally condemned.

That is why, if Conservatism is to be saved, it must be elevated beyond its present popular and exoteric connotation, and must cease to be regarded, at least by its supporters, as merely a position of political caution and obstruction.

Burke approaches the truth in this matter when he says: 'A disposition to preserve and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman.'² But even this is too vague. It is too prone to appeal to the sentimental and least reliable side of people's natures. It makes them think of the Lord Mayor's Show, and of the Beefeaters at the Tower, the sight of which gives them pleasant sensations, and they forget the vital and unsentimental side of preservation, which consists of a ruthless and uncompromising attitude of war towards all decaying, moribund and morbid elements.

¹ See for instance J. A. Froude's *Reciprocal Duties of State and Subject*, where the author gives the popular general view on this matter as follows: 'It is admitted on all sides that the two parties which divide the country represent each a form of thought which is the complement of the other. Her Majesty's Government is incomplete without Her Majesty's Opposition.' Froude subsequently scoffs at this idea, and very rightly. But there can be no doubt that it represents the general and often the learned view.

² *Reflections*. Towards the end of the essay he says: 'I would not exclude alteration either, but even when I changed, it should be to preserve.' This is good. But it is not yet sufficiently clear. What is it that requires preserving? One is left to suspect that it is merely old institutions for the sake of their venerable antiquity.

That aspect of Conservatism which will always cause it to be loved by the ignorant, though healthy and contented elements in the masses, is precisely its tendency to obstruct novelty and change; but that aspect of it which will cause it to prevail and to shine gloriously in the nation's history, is its tendency to prevent rot from attacking and from spreading throughout the institutions of the country.

We are now in a position to give the esoteric connotation of Conservatism as a political credo and position, and our first step will be to dismiss from our minds all ideas connected with the exoteric connotation.

Before esoteric and statesman's Conservatism is defined, however, it is necessary first to make clear what is meant by politics.

Politics is the science of conducting national affairs by directing and framing national policies. National policies are schemes and methods for the regulation and guidance of national energy with the view of attaining national ends.¹

If it is at all desirable that a nation's life should be continued—and few nations would be disposed to question the desirability at least of their own continuance—the whole of national politics resolves itself into a science of preservation. Since, however, it is a matter of preserving a living, growing and therefore changing phenomenon, politics cannot be merely a scientific abstention from interference, as if an immovable and incorrodible rock had to be preserved, but a science of enlightened interference after the style of forestry.

But all flourishing life means not only growth but, through growth, expansion. And national life is no exception to this rule. The politics of a flourishing

¹ See William Sanderson, *Statecraft*.

nation, therefore, will have to be a science not only of national preservation, but of national expansion. To deny this is to question the validity of one of our first conclusions, which was that the life of a nation should continue.

If, however, expansion is to be the extending of a nation, and not merely the centrifugal dispersion of unidentified superfluous units of the nation's life, preservation will become part of the process of expansion. The whole of the politics of a flourishing nation, therefore, resolves itself into a science of expansion with preservation, on the enlightened interfering lines of successful forestry. And he who practises this science is called a politician.

All political parties which claim to be national and not international, which claim to be patriotic and not cosmopolitan, must consequently be conservative. They may differ regarding the means by which they propose to gain this end, but they must be either conservative or the enemies of their nation's future. For the word conservative, from the Latin *con*, together, and *servare* to keep, means to keep together. Even a patriotic revolutionary, as we have seen, must be a conservative, otherwise he is to be suspected of desiring his revolution merely as a pyrotechnic display, the results of which are to die down with the extinguishing of the last sparks. If he desires his revolution, for the good of his nation, as he would if he were patriotic, he must desire the results of his revolution to endure. And at that point he becomes a Conservative. This explains the curious phenomenon, recurring through history, of the revolutionary who ultimately becomes a 'reactionary' and who is frivolously accused of inconsistency by the thoughtless, because of his apparent change of attitude—as if a revolutionary were a man whose 'profession',

like that of the singer, the actor, or the doctor, must endure for his lifetime, even after his aims have been achieved!

In the light of this explanation the term Liberal or Labour, as a title of party, ought to be opposed to Conservative in current politics only as a sign of disagreement regarding means. There is no sense in a Liberal or Labour politician who does not wish to preserve in expansion. If he be anti-Conservative apart from the question of means, he can only be logical if he deny either the desire to expand, or the desire to preserve, or both. But then he is not a true politician according to the definition given above, because he is not a framer of a national policy. He is merely realising some ambition of his own, which is hostile to the nation's future.

Esoteric or statesman's Conservatism, then, is the position of those who, far from being merely opposed to change, wish only to *preserve the national identity throughout the changes introduced by growth and expansion*. The difference is very simple, but it involves many enormous difficulties. It is very much more strenuous to preserve a definite quality through change, than to be opposed to change *per se*. That is why the indolence and increasing stupidity of the Conservative Party has gradually led to their gravitating to the exoteric and popular understanding of their position.

The claim of the alert and live Conservative politician should, however, be that he wishes to preserve the identity of his nation throughout change, and that in this effort to preserve his nation's identity throughout change, he takes as his model the best and most characteristic types which his nation has produced. But if this be his claim, he is committed to the further claims:

(a) That he wishes to preserve the national character, with all that this means in the safeguarding of a native and particular potentiality for success, mastery, and sanity in certain well defined callings, environmental conditions, and opportunities for self-expression and expansion.

(b) That he wishes to preserve the national health, not only because ill health means maladaptation and therefore a non-creative desire for change, but also because it leads to the decay of national strength, capacity and character. To be a good forester a man must know how to give trees their proper health conditions, and he must also know how and when to chop and prune them. In the words of Tennyson:

That man's a true Conservative
Who lops the mouldered branch away.¹

(c) That in criticising agitations for change, he knows how,² or takes care to learn how, to distinguish between the demands coming from a redundancy of spirit and capacity, which if gratified may lead to national progress, and the demands coming from impoverished spirit and capacity, which, if gratified, must inevitably lead to national decline. But, even in examining the first named demands for change, he must bear in mind that not all change, even of an apparently progressive kind, is necessarily compatible with the national character and physique.

(d) That in criticising agitations for change coming from the unhappy, he knows how, or takes care to learn how, to distinguish between maladaptation

¹ *Hands all Round.*

² Regarding that taste, which should be the possession of every great statesman, and which enables him properly to perform the duties of selection and rejection, it is impossible to say much here. The whole question is discussed with sufficient detail in Chapter I of my *Defence of Aristocracy.*

arising from injustice and oppression, and maladaptation which is the outcome of degeneracy, and morbid natures. By meeting the demands of the first he will achieve improvement if not progress. By meeting the demands of the second he may do no more than penalise the whole nation and reduce its vigour and its standards.

(e) That he wishes to maintain the national prestige, because prestige is power, and power is safety, and safety is security for the present and future.

(f) That he knows enough about the character and potentialities of his people, and about the eternal characteristics of healthy mankind in general, to be able to judge whether new tendencies are possible or fantastic (i.e., whether they are in keeping with the eternal nature of men, or the particular character of his nation, or whether they apply only to angels, goblins, fairies, or other romantic fictions, who alone seem to suit the exigencies of hundreds of modern hare-brained schemes).¹

Hence he believes in the advisability of having as politicians, not only men who can lay some valid claim to a knowledge of humanity, but also men who belong to the stock of those whose policy they are called upon to direct. He also disbelieves, therefore, in having Jews, or men of foreign extraction, or odd people—that is to say, eccentrics, cranks, and fanatics, as politicians in an English Parliament.

(g) That he is deeply concerned about the happi-

¹ Burke felt this deeply. He says: 'I have endeavoured through my whole life to make myself acquainted with human nature; otherwise I should be unfit to take even my humble part in the service of mankind.' Later he says: 'I allow all this because I am a man who have dealt with men.' Speaking of ancient legislators, he says: 'They had to do with men, and they were obliged to study human nature . . . they followed with a solicitous accuracy the moral conditions and propensities of men' (*Reflections*).

ness and the heart of the people of his nation, because unhappiness and dejection are the most frequent cause of a demand for change which is by no means necessarily creative or progressive.¹

(h) That in dealing with the *vis major* which threatens to enforce changes on the nation from outside, he knows how to be prepared, to act firmly and swiftly, and with the whole front of his nation's strength against the enemy. Because the *vis major* comes as a result of an extension of power on the part of another nation. The Conservative politician is, however, only concerned with securing the extension of his own nation's power, and cannot therefore tolerate anything that jeopardises or limits this extension. It is often argued that unpreparedness for the *vis major* is in itself a sign of inadequate or feeble government or culture. This, however, is not always true. A nation cannot equip itself like the White Knight in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* for every possible emergency. The effort to do so would in all probability bring down its whole culture with a crash. For instance, how could the Peruvians or Mexicans have prepared for the Spaniards, seeing that they did not know of their existence? If the government of a nation are to be expected to prepare for every emergency, known and unknown, then no limit can be described to the precautions they ought to take. Who can tell what the other planets hold in store for us? Are we to cover ourselves entirely with a steel roof in anticipation of the approaching incursion into terrestrial atmosphere of the inhabitants of some distant heavenly body? It is obvious that the White Knight

¹ 'With fear and trembling,' said Confucius, 'take care of the heart of the people: that is the root of the matter in education—that is the highest education.' Cf. Disraeli: 'Power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the People.' (*Sybil*.)

would strongly advise some such precaution. But as we have already pointed out, the effort to provide for every such emergency, probable or only remotely possible, would bring the whole of modern civilisation down with a crash, and survival would hardly be feasible. As we know, the White Knight's horse staggered along under the load of an unconscionable amount of tackle which most rational travellers would have scrapped without a moment's hesitation. In criticising conservative Peru, Mexico, and even ancient Egypt, in criticising also great conservative civilisations like that of China, that of India, and even that of the Bushmen of Africa,¹ we should therefore hesitate before too hastily condemning the politicians of these countries for their unpreparedness; because, in anticipating unknown emergencies, for the purpose of preserving a nation, it is possible to go beyond that nation's strength, and thus to defeat the very object which politicians are supposed to serve.

Summing up, therefore, we may say that *esoteric Conservatism is the preservation of the national identity throughout the processes of change, by a steady concern about quality in the whole of the nation's life.*

And thus Conservatism naturally unites with the aristocratic tradition which also is concerned chiefly with qualitative as opposed to quantitative values.

Truth to tell, the radical antagonism between democratic and aristocratic tendencies consists precisely in the impossibility of effecting a compromise between quantitative and qualitative valuations.

Under democratic influence, bulk and numbers begin to take the place of quality in every department of the national life. This is so not only in the mass production of articles of use and food, it is not so

¹ For an excellent account of this civilisation and its great value see Dr. Sollas's *Ancient Hunters*.

only in the measurement of social value, which depends upon the amount of a man's accumulated wealth, but it is also the principle observed in assessing the value of a thought, a policy, a statesman and an institution. That thought is regarded as right which has the greatest number behind it. That policy and statesman are regarded as right which have the greatest number of votes behind them. And that institution is regarded as wrong or useless which has the greatest number of objectors to it. The aristocratic tendency, which is to measure the value of a thought or policy, according to the authority, knowledge, ability, and competence behind it, is thus superseded in democratic times by a materialistic weighing of the bodies either for or against.

But this purely materialistic principle leads to the neglect of what is most important in the measurement of value—to wit, authority and quality. It amounts, therefore, in practice, to a failure to distinguish between changes which are demanded by undesirable, and those which are demanded by desirable elements in a nation. It leads inevitably to an unconcern about quality in every phase of the nation's life, whether it be a matter of valuing the human unit himself, or his mind, or his food, or his work, or his mating, or his culture.

This, however, is in direct antagonism to the principle of preservation. No living, growing, and surviving whole can be preserved if due regard is not paid to its quality. It is therefore also directly opposed to the principle of Conservatism; for we have claimed that Conservatism must preserve the identity of the nation throughout change, and that it is part of the function of Conservatism constantly to discover, and to be guided by, the distinctions which quantitative valuations take no account of.

Here then, esoteric Conservatism and Aristocracy necessarily meet; because to ignore qualitative valuations in the measurement of material things is disastrous enough; but to ignore them in the measurement of thought, policies, and principles amounts to national suicide.

What, however, is the consequence of this necessary union of Conservatism with aristocratic ideals? Obviously, in the popular mind of to-day, particularly when it is misguided by radical and revolutionary agitators, it is that Conservatism acquires the complexion of an anti-popular party. Indeed, if so thoughtful a writer as De Quincey came to this erroneous conclusion as early as 1835,¹ it can hardly be expected that less thoughtful men would escape it. It certainly served Mr. Lloyd George and the Liberal Party a very good turn for the purpose of party propaganda in the General Elections of 1906 and 1910; and yet it is entirely unfounded. Quite apart from the fact that the Tory, and later the Conservative Party, has always been a defender of the people, a party is not necessarily anti-popular because it feels itself constrained to consider and to exalt qualitative valuations. No sound policy of national preservation with expansion is possible without them. To omit to be guided by them is, indeed, tantamount to abandoning the position of a politician as defined above.

¹ See *A Tory's Account of Toryism, Whiggism and Radicalism*, written in 1835 (Vol. XV of the Author's Edition of his Works. A. and C. Black, 1863, p. 226): 'A Whig is he who, in the practical administration of affairs, takes charge of the popular influence, guides and supports it; a Tory, on the contrary, is he who takes charge of the antagonist or non-popular influence, guides and supports it. . . . And in this view, neither is wrong, nor can be wrong, both are right. And, so far from being hostile to each other, each is right only by means of and through his antagonist. . . . Taken jointly, they make up the total truth.'

And, at the end of the Great War, even so shallow a politician as Mr. Lloyd George (if indeed he may be classed as a politician at all) was bound to recognise the importance of qualitative valuations, and of the disastrous consequences of their neglect, when he dealt with the appalling report about the nation's physical condition, published by the Ministry of Health.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the historical and other evidence to the contrary, it is extraordinary how simple it has been for Liberal, Radical and Labour opponents of Conservatism, to contend that Conservatives are really the anti-popular party. And since, as we have shown, the union of Aristocracy and Conservatism is an inevitable one, a colourable warrant seems to be given to this contention in the eyes of the multitude.

But this unhappy consequence of the meeting of Aristocracy and Conservatism in matters of principle, is as easily corrected as it is exploited by the political opponents of both. Because, fortunately, it is quite untrue on the philosophic plane (in as much as the preservation of the identity of the nation must involve a tender consideration for the health, welfare and happiness of the masses) while, historically, it is only partially true, and where it is true, denotes on the part of Tories and Conservatives, not an observance of their guiding political principles, but, as I have shown in my *Defence of Aristocracy*,¹ a departure from these principles. Thus, to the extent to which they become anti-popular they cease to be truly aristocratic or Conservative.

It is obvious that, in practice, the heavy responsibility of distinguishing between progressive and regressive demands for change, may frequently give the sound Conservative the appearance of an anti-

¹ See Chapters II and III of *The English Aristocrat as a Failure*.

popular obstructionist; but if we had ever had in this country an enlightened organ of Conservatism that enjoyed a wide circulation among the working classes, it would have been a simple matter to correct even this misapprehension.

Hume is more sound than De Quincey, therefore, when he argues that 'the Tories, as men, were enemies to oppression, and also as Englishmen they were enemies to arbitrary power'¹; but even De Quincey somewhat retrieves his former position when he denies utterly 'the pretence that the Tory acts, taken comprehensively, have been less friendly to civil liberty than those of their antagonists.'²

If Aristocracy and Conservatism have, in a large measure, failed in England; if the politicians believing in these positions have frequently afforded some warrant for the belief that they are not the friends of the people, it is because thoughtful politicians have been rare, and because the principles of Conservatism have only seldom been properly understood by those who have all their lives professed to be either Conservatives or Aristocrats.

Grave as these defects have been, however, they are more excusable in the Conservative commoner as such than in the born aristocrat and gentleman landowner; because, whereas the former has very frequently, although quite foolishly, been pressed, either by the weight of his political duties, or else by the exigencies of his party, to forget or to neglect his fundamental principles, the two latter have as frequently had all the leisure and independence, which alone enable a man, who is not a hero, to abide unflinchingly by his beliefs and his duty.

¹ See Essay: 'Of the Parties of Great Britain'.

² *On the Political Parties of Modern England*, written in 1837 (Edition and Vol. already given) p. 219.

The most disgraceful of all causes, however, which have contributed to the failure of Aristocracy and Conservatism in this country, is not the deliberate neglect or forgetfulness of conservative principles for purposes of momentary expediency, but the ignorance of these principles by professed Conservatives and Aristocrats themselves. Thus, as a body, they have frequently failed to observe qualitative valuations, either in regard to themselves or to any aspect of the national life. They have thought so loosely as to identify themselves with the oppressors and exploiters of the people. They have never proceeded to a precise formulation of their principles, and abided by it. In this respect they have been much less skilful than the Socialists or Communists. In spite of long terms of office, they have not consistently regarded it as among their first duties to care for the heart and health of the people. So far have they misunderstood the fundamental principle of their creed—the need of preserving the identity of the nation through change—that they have never properly distinguished between the age of an institution as such, and its value. And, certainly within recent years, they have made no contributions to any great national problem, which were based on sound Conservative principles.

When Lord Derby came into office in 1858 with the idea of cutting the ground from under Mr. Gladstone's feet by introducing a Reform Bill, Froude asked a friend why the Tories did not keep to their own province. 'Authority was everywhere falling to pieces, why did they not say frankly they would try to check, for instance, the dishonesty of trade, and that if the people wanted reform bills they must go to those who believed that reform would do them good?'

Froude's friend replied that if the Tories attempted

any such thing they would immediately be thrown out.

Froude agreed, but protested that they would return in a year or two with every right-minded Englishman at their backs.

His friend replied it would never do. The Tories had long been out of power, and they wanted patronage.¹

A good part of the problem of Conservative statesmanship is involved in this discussion. Is it ever possible for a political party in the interests of a lofty national object, to play the heroic part of abiding by its principles, or must opportunism always be the practice of the active politician?

If opportunism is the only resort of politicians playing for office, then obviously it is a waste of time to discuss principles and to allot them to any particular party. Then the practice, so much favoured by Conservative politicians in the past, of stealing the clothes of the Liberals or the Radicals or even the Socialists, while these gentlemen are away bathing, becomes the highest wisdom, and party differences become mere make-believe.² But is it in the long run profitable to exalt opportunism above principle?

The circumstances of democratic control may possibly make principles quite impracticable. It may be that the inherent vice of democratic control consists precisely in the insuperable difficulty of eschewing opportunism in favour of principle. But, in that case, we must cease to speak of Conservatives, Liberals and Labourites. The words have no meaning.

¹ Reciprocal Duties of State and Subject.

² Thus Arthur Ponsonby, M.P., one of the bitterest critics of Conservatism, says: 'The old-fashioned and honest Conservative, however, is a more attractive figure than the timid opportunist who follows half-heartedly in a more progressive course, but can never be relied upon to pull his weight in the boat.' (See his *Religion and Politics*, p. 10.)

Lord Hugh Cecil seems to countenance this state of things by what I cannot help regarding as a confusion of thought. He says: 'It is, indeed, the peculiar merit of practical men that they are opportunists, that they are indifferent whether or not what they do to-day falls into the same category of political thought as what they did yesterday, so long as both yesterday and to-day they succeed in the object they have in view.'¹

'The peculiar merit?' Is it then a merit to be devoid of principle? We may see the prevalence of this deficiency in so-called practical politicians. But may we call it a merit, and may we call him practical who reveals it? For, after all, what constitutes success in practical politics? Does it not amount to securing the confidence of the country? And with such a popular creed as Conservatism, which finds its support in the deepest instincts of all men, this should not be difficult. But how can confidence be won by inconsistency? Besides, every thoughtful person must strongly deprecate the separation of what is practical from what is theoretically right. This separation, however, is implicit in Lord Hugh Cecil's sentence. The man who is inconsistent is theoretically wrong. How then can he be practically right? Does Lord Hugh Cecil accept the shallow though popular belief that one may be right in theory but wrong in practice? If so, why does he set himself up as a teacher of Conservative theory?

Opportunism is inconsistency. It implies and is a lack of principle. To a man who enters the political arena with the object of being an opportunist, all theory, all principles, are so much superfluous baggage. But let us not suppose that he is therefore a better equipped practical politician. He will only succeed

¹ *Conservatism*, Chapter III.

as long as he is not found out. His success may mean the ruin of his country or his party, through the discredit he will bring on both. And he will debase the period in which he shines by depending upon the worst elements of the nation for his triumph.

All this may be merit; but it cannot be practical, if we mean by practical that which is useful or serves some useful end.

And yet it must be admitted that party politics have become increasingly opportunist. And the discredit which lies to the score of the Conservative and Aristocratic parties, is due largely to the fact that, where they might have been leaders, and sometimes the heroic opponents of the people's will, for the people's ultimate good, they have all too frequently been opportunists and demagogues. And thus they have lost their prestige. In a country so deeply conservative as England, all that the people wanted was protection and a consistent lead from the party which had the right to call themselves gentlemen. Because this is what the masses had been accustomed to. For something like five hundred years of its history, the English people had looked to their gentlemen to lead them and to defend their liberties, even at the risk of sometimes finding themselves checked in their more unreasonable demands. They were prepared to continue along these lines. It was the easiest and the best course. And they would have continued had they not lost faith. How did they lose faith? By recognising time after time that the gentleman party were no better than their own demagogues for opportunism and lack of principle.

'Why are the people of England forced to find leaders among these persons [meaning Liberal and

Radical demagogues]?' Disraeli asks.¹ 'The proper leaders of England are the gentlemen of England. If they are not the leaders of the people I do not see why they should be gentlemen. Yes, it is because the gentlemen of England have been negligent of their duties and unmindful of their station that the system of professional agitation, so ruinous to the best interests of the country, has arisen in England.'

Too little has been made of imagination and too much has been made of compromise. What caused the revulsion of feeling in favour of royalty after the Grand Rebellion, which makes the people of this country probably the most Royalist of any nation on earth? What made England endure with cheerfulness the rule of a cynical and debauched Don Juan like Charles II for twenty-five years, and a succession of monarchs like the Georges for a century? Was it not the prestige that monarchy had gained by the death, through adherence to principle, of that great monarch, Charles I? Everybody is agreed that if at the last moment Charles I had chosen to be opportunist, and to deliver up both his people and his Church to the mercy of the Parliamentary Party, he would have saved his life. On the scaffold he called himself the martyr of the people. He was just as much the martyr of the Church of England.

But though his consistency cost him his life, it stirred the imagination of his country as it had never been stirred before, and so bound the populace to the cause of monarchy that his successors on the throne were able to indulge in the worst abuses without bringing monarchy into discredit.

¹ *Life of Disraeli* (Money and Buckle, Vol. III, p. 101). See also *Lord George Bentinck, A Political Biography*, by B. Disraeli (Ed. 1852), p. 325: 'The first duty of an aristocracy is to lead, to guide and to enlighten, to soften vulgar prejudices and to dare to encounter popular passion.'

It is my belief that the same attitude, the same unflinching adherence to principle, on the part of a political party even to-day, would have the same result. A momentary heavy loss would be rewarded a thousandfold by the reaction that would follow, when once it became known that the loss had been incurred owing to an adherence to principle. Very naturally, the principle to which heroic adherence is displayed would have to be a right one; it would have to be framed for the whole country's ultimate good. But it is only for principles of this magnitude that a heroic attitude is worth while. And then the party who assumes it cannot fail to stir the imagination of the people.

That is why I believe, with Froude, that when political leaders are wise, they gain prestige and confidence by refusing to be opportunists, even at the cost of office. But they must lead. They must have principles, and they must have thought over them. And it is precisely in these prerequisites of sound political action that the Tories and later the Conservatives have been so singularly lacking.

Speaking of the Tories of his day, Disraeli said: 'They had not a single definite or intelligent idea as to their position or their duties, or the character of their party. They were haunted with a nervous apprehension of that great bugbear, 'The People', that bewildering title under which a miserable minority contrives to coerce and plunder a nation. They were ignorant that the millions of that nation required to be guided and encouraged, and that they were that nation's natural leaders, bound to marshal and enlighten them.'¹

These questions occur to the reader: Is it not now too late to speak of leading the masses? Are not the

¹ *Benjamin Disraeli*, by Wilfred Meynell (1903), p. 262.

People now too powerful and too conscious of their power to require or to suffer leadership? Moreover, is it not now impossible to distinguish in the confusion of the polls, between that clamour for change which is regressive and that which is progressive? Has not the development of democratic control, by which the electorate has increased from 839,000 in 1835 to 17,657,733 in 1921, made a Conservative Party in the sense in which it is described above, quite impossible? Is it any longer possible to speak of such Conservative principles as I have outlined in the preceeding pages?

To the first of these questions I would reply by another question: Has the reader any doubt about the fact that journalists are now to a large extent the leaders of public opinion? Has he any doubt whatever that newspaper influence is powerful and effective? If he has not, and I don't think he is entitled to entertain much doubt on these points, why does he suppose that leadership is at an end? It may be deplorable that men like journalists, many of whom are untrained thinkers, many more of whom are untrained in the particular science of politics in which they profess to play the part of leaders, and almost all of whom have to be opportunists, should disport themselves as the official guides of national political opinion. It may be very sad that the journalists of the country, who cannot, like politicians, be held responsible for the policies they advocate, should be in a position to advocate policies. And it may be very tragic that newspaper owners, on whom no one can retaliate, and who cannot be brought to book if their influence is pernicious, can exercise the political influence they do. All this shows, however, not that leadership of the People is no longer necessary, but that the office of leader has been filled by usurpers.

Be this as it may, the journalist cannot be accused of having usurped the position by violence. He is merely the particle of matter that inevitably gets driven in, wherever a vacuum has been created. Political thought in England, particularly on the Conservative side, has been, and still is, represented by a vacuum. Whose fault is it if the space constituting the vacuum has ultimately been filled by heterogeneous and foreign matter of a kind we do not expect to find there?

The very fact that the vacuum has been filled at all, is subject for congratulation rather than for regret, because at least it has kept the tradition of political leadership unbroken, and has preserved for true leaders a public which, despite its 18,000,000 votes and its alleged education, is still trained to habits of sequatiousness and docility.

What then is the moral? Supply the need of political leadership in the proper and effective way. Restore to the people their hereditary birthright, which is a body of men, not only trained to lead in the particular science which is now being invaded by clever and glib laymen, but who will also be responsible in a way that journalists cannot be made responsible, for the lead they give; and the result will be that politics will begin to acquire a more dignified and more serious mien.

It will be objected that such leadership is now impracticable because it is too costly, and above all depends upon a personnel of able and impressive scientists, who are difficult to find and who are, moreover, expensive to keep. But I know, with personal and intimate knowledge, of at least one private concern that employs thirty men of university education, each of whom is supplied with a touring car, to travel the country all the year round in order

to persuade people to adopt a particular policy in agriculture. Is it possible that what a private firm finds it profitable to do, a large and influential political party cannot do, even when the welfare of the country is at stake? Is it only at election time that a serious body of political thinkers ought to feel it incumbent upon them to appeal to the country?

Obviously not! Let us therefore no longer imagine that political leadership is impossible, or that journalists adequately supply the need of it, or that the political power of journalists cannot now be superseded. I have spoken on politics sufficiently often in English villages to be aware of the sore need that exists for leadership, and of how imperfectly it is met by the newspaper article.

There is not even any necessity for the kind of propagandist machinery which I have described as having been adopted by a certain private firm for the spread of their particular system of cultivation. Have we not our country gentlemen distributed all over England? Do they not enjoy an intimate and thorough knowledge of the people about them? What could they have been doing all this time to allow journalists to mould the opinions of their less educated neighbours? When, however, these country gentlemen are seen at close quarters, they are all too frequently found to be so ill-prepared for the mission that awaits them, that it is hardly surprising that they can only be stirred into momentary activity, at each general election, by the fear of Bolshevism.

The fact that, whereas in 1860, 108 of the total Members of Parliaments, were the sons of peers, or heirs to peerages, only 33 belonged to the class in 1906, is typical of the times. It is thus that politics, the most honourable and most difficult of sciences, has been relegated to quill-drivers, adventurers, and

agitators of all sorts, whose personal interest it is to mislead rather than to lead, and who, even if they honestly wished to lead, are hardly equipped to do so with any hope of good results.

In reply to the second part of the question—the practicability of the principle I have laid down, which consists in the Conservative duty to distinguish between regressive and progressive clamours for change—this has indeed been complicated by the development of democratic control, but it has not been made impossible. Does such clamour ever manifest itself in the form of sending a representative to Westminster? It does so manifest itself, the reader may think, when a Communist is returned to Parliament. But in that case it is easily dealt with in Parliament itself. Suppose, however, it never gets as far as that. My suggestion is that in that case it can be dealt with on the spot—i.e. at the place where it is manifested. But it can only be dealt with satisfactorily by a competent politician capable of making his objections to it clear and forcible.

Let us look at this for the moment from the standpoint of a commercial enterprise offering some improved implement for agriculture. A certain district in South Somerset refuses to deal with the firm's representative, because, unlike advanced Lincoln, it fails to see the advantage of the new device, and continues to clamour for an antiquated and obsolete implement which unnecessarily limits production. Here, evidently, we have a problem in education. How is it solved by business men? It is solved by adopting the course of re-educating the district.

But is not this also the duty of the politician in a similar dilemma? If the clamour never reaches Westminster, he must debate the merits of its object with the people who raise it. But for that task he

must be competent. The whole theory of Parliamentary representation, however, is based on the assumption that he is competent. The fact that local men so frequently stand for particular constituencies is an implicit endorsement of this principle. They are supposed to know best the conditions prevailing in their constituencies. The vicious practice of sending an irresponsible but glib speaker from London to Taunton to represent people he hardly knows, is one of the causes of the discredit which has fallen not only on political parties, but also on Parliament itself, during the last two or three generations. And whatever may be said against the old squirearchy which once supplied the personnel of the House of Commons, it was at least their eminently desirable virtue that they belonged to the district they represented. The pernicious practice which prevailed from about the time of the Revolution in 1688 to the time of the first Reform Bill, of filling the House of Commons with nominees of powerful individuals or bodies,¹ destroyed this tradition. And although to-day it is no longer possible for individuals to return members to Parliament, the effect of this once existing privilege remains with us in the form of too much non-expert representation by non-local men, owing to candidates for election being the nominees of their central political organisation, or what Lord Hugh Cecil calls the 'Prætorian Guard' of their party.² Also it should not be forgotten that whereas unsuitable men are no longer returned as nominees of powerful individuals, powerful individuals themselves, who have not

¹ In 1832, for instance, only 117 of 658 members were returned by constituencies not altogether dependent upon patrons.

² *Op. Cit.* Chapter VIII. When it is remembered that all that is asked and expected of these men is that they should vote as their party managers wish them to vote, their value as representatives of a district is no greater than it was in 1832.

necessarily anything that binds them knowledgeably to the districts they stand for, can still procure their own return by relieving their central political organisation of any expense in their election, and by using their own means to nurse the constituency which they select. Thus I have heard it said by one prominent politician that he would undertake with ten thousand pounds to win any constituency in the kingdom. Even this method, however, does not secure independence. Because, unless the individual in question is looked upon with favour by his party, and proves amenable in the House, he will rarely secure re-election in competition with party nominees.

It is this kind of abuse that is leading more and more to the total discredit of Parliamentary institutions. Indeed the latter can hardly hope to survive for long if the abuse be allowed to continue. And, seeing that no other alternative exists in our Constitution, we are faced with the possibility of a dictatorship, or else complete anarchy. In other countries, where Parliamentary institutions have been discredited in this way, in Italy, France, Greece and Spain, the new trend towards the overthrow of democratic control is already apparent, and England is hardly likely to withhold herself long from a movement that appears to be the inevitable development of an unreal and factitious Republicanism.

Chapter II

CONSERVATISM AND REALISM

THERE is no such thing as a Conservative or a quality-loving class. Neither is there any stratiform division of opinion between the creeds represented by Conservatism and Aristocracy, and other creeds. Since both Aristocratic and Conservative doctrine overlap in their exaltation of stability and authority, and in their common principle regarding the need of qualitative values, they find their best adherents in every sphere of society—i.e., wherever the type occurs which instinctively measures the worth of a thing and a person according to their quality, and who appreciates the *power of time* in the production of anything precious.

The artisan who is conscientious at his work, and who devotes as much time as possible to acquiring proficiency at it, the artist who, in his criticism, is severest towards himself, and who is never satisfied that he has completed his apprenticeship; the man of noble birth, who knows how to surround himself not only with truly noble people, but with truly noble things—people and things, that is to say, who bear the unmistakable hall mark of quality: such people are either actual or potential aristocrats, and nothing can rob them of this title. On the other hand, the Duke who has no sense of, and no antennæ for quality, who overlooks in himself and others a lack of the virtue and capacity which originally raised his class to its position of privilege, who does not know how to surround himself either with things or with people of quality, and who knows nothing of the necessity

of time in the production of precious things, is, like the unconscientious artisan and the uncritical and self-complacent artist, a plebeian and ruffian by nature, whom nothing can elevate to the class of the born Conservative or Aristocrat.

The violence that has been done to truth by attempting to fit social classes compactly into political parties, is probably the primary cause of the confusion now existing in the public mind regarding domestic politics in this country. And that is why it cannot be repeated too often that the Conservative and man of qualitative judgment—I do not mean the aristocratic ruler—is an example of a very definite type of mind and body, which occurs in all classes, and is by no means necessarily more common in the present House of Lords than in a coal-pit.¹

Anthropologists speak of a 'culture potential' in native races, by which they mean a certain people's capacity to evolve up to a certain plane of cultural organisation and not beyond it; and they often quote Liberia, the negro State of West Africa, as an example of their meaning. The negroes who were given Liberia, and who consisted very largely of the descendants of liberated slaves from America, had their culture imposed upon them from without by a benevolent Europæoid people, who gave them their constitution, cut and dried, their laws, and the pattern for the rest of their institutions. But the negro's 'culture potential' soon made havoc of the ready-made white

¹ It is obvious that the present House of Lords is not constituted of aristocratic rulers in any sense; its recruits being chosen not on account of their possession of ruler qualities, or the acquirement of these qualities through generations of discipline in a lower rank of society; but simply on account of their success either in trade, commerce, law, journalism, party politics or the army and navy. But, even so, it is a much better and more efficient body of men than the Commons (see pp. 170-178).

culture forced upon it, and now, according to the accounts of recent travellers, their senate, their house of representatives, their army, their police and all the rest of their non-negroid institutions, are but a grotesque and lamentable travesty of the white patterns which they once represented.

The same phenomenon of a 'culture potential' might be used to explain the fundamental divergence between the men who incline instinctively to qualitative, and the men who incline instinctively to quantitative values, and the social form which each evolves is as different as can be from the other. When a nation is divided between these two types, the compromise effected is frequently unsatisfactory and unstable; and as a complete fusion of the two social forms is never possible, there results the condition found in England to-day, which is one of constant and bitter internecine warfare.

The body of people inclining to quantitative values, which will draw its recruits from every social class, will tend to disruption, instability and futile change, despite that instinctive conservatism of all men discussed in the previous chapter, because it will never perceive the necessary relation between time and quality. Its conservatism will be largely self-interest, purse-anxiety; and if it possesses nothing, its conservatism will be feeble, because no self-interest will incline it to a stable state of things. Thus, on the Conservative side, the members of this body will be unreliable and unprincipled, and on the non-conservative side, anarchical and subversive. Their culture potential will reach its limits in commercial wealth, and their expression in all things is likely to take an ugly and bulky form.

The body of people inclining to qualitative values, which will also draw its recruits from every social

class, will, on the other hand, tend to construction, stability and preservation, not only of things but also of family traits and strains; and in it the instinctive conservatism of all men will be reinforced by a deep understanding of the necessary relation between time and quality. Its conservatism will not be merely self-interest, it will consist of a wish to retain a stable environment, often against apparent self-interest, for the maturing of its seeds of quality. And where self-interest enters as a factor, it will be but a confirmation of the primary impulse. Thus, on the merely Conservative side, the members of this body will be strong, principled, and constructive, and on the aristocratic side they will be patrons, selectors, and cultivators of lasting and beautiful things, whether in the personnel or the chattels of their nation. The culture potential of this body will reach its limits in perfection of social organisation, and in the beauty of the people and of their environmental conditions. Its expression will take the form of beauty.

The dramatic material success of the former body, which is their chief interest in life, may and frequently does lead to their multiplication; and this is more likely to occur when the prevailing values favour their particular activities.

On the other hand the relatively small concern about material success which characterises the latter body, a concern which is largely swamped by the primary impulse to quality and beauty, may, if the prevailing values do not protect them, lead to their subordination or extinction at the hands of the quantitativists. And then that part of the nation which supplies it with its most valuable qualities, and therefore its chief equipment for stability, tends to decline and disappear.

Beauty contemplating her features in a mirror

knows but one devil, which with all her might she wishes to cast out, and that is *Change*. To the skilful beautifying surgeon who offers to improve the line of her face by an operation, however slight, she promptly shows the door. And she is right.

On the other hand, Ugliness, which cannot be altered, however slightly, but she will improve, provides the beautifying surgeons with seven-eighths of their incomes, and to these gentlemen her sanctuary has an ever open door.

This simple parable should not be forgotten in measuring the worth, and the attitude of mind of the two bodies above described, in regard to change and so-called 'amelioration'. And when in the presence of a society in which much wealth is constantly being devoted to change, and in which beautifying surgeons abound and flourish, it is only prudent to suspect that rich quantitativists are at the head, and that their creation has been ugliness.

The fact that this struggle between quantitative and qualitative values is no myth can be demonstrated from the records of the past; and I have even attempted in my *Defence of Aristocracy* to place my finger upon the precise period in English history, when in this country the balance finally turned in favour of the former; and the latter were left unprotected and abandoned to neglect and decline.¹

Throughout the Middle Ages, we find in every sphere of English life that the pursuit of quality is the paramount preoccupation. Workmen and tradesmen combined in those days not as now in order to keep up the price of their labours, to resist the public and the purchasers of their wares, and to reduce efficiency to the standard of the slowest and most slovenly worker, but, in order to maintain a standard of quality

¹ See Chapter V: *The Metamorphosis of the Englishman*.

in the work or goods they produced and purveyed. The guilds which were the outcome of these combinations, punished breaches of technical conscientiousness, or of fair-dealing with severity. Their regulations 'aimed at securing good work', and, as an example of their efforts in this direction, they forbade night work as leading to work poor in quality¹ (this was also the rule in French *frairies* and trade associations). The guild system led to municipal control 'with a view to securing a good quality of produce',² and when it broke down there was nothing to take its place till its valuable functions were inadequately and partially revived in recent years by Adulteration Acts, etc.

But the craft gildsmen of the Middle Ages insisted on maintaining quality 'for the honour of their gild', and there can be no doubt that much of their system of regulations was 'intended to check fraud and maintain the corporate good name of their craft'.³ So-called 'searchers' were appointed by the guilds to discover and check fraud, bad quality, and dishonesty in the productions of their fellow gildsmen's work. Thus the London Lorimers in 1261 compiled rules 'for the abating of guile and trickery' among the members of the gild practising their 'mystery'. In addition to other rules there was to be 'no re-furbishing of old horse-bits to sell as new', and 'no night work'. Among the cappers in 1269, it was forbidden to make caps except of wool, and old caps might not be sold for new. It was also forbidden to dye caps with black, because this colour would run in the rain. The cordwainers had to swear that when they made shoes they would mix 'no manner of leather with other',

¹ *From Gild to Factory*, by Alfred Milnes, M.A., p. 39. See also Mary Bateson *Mediæval England*, p. 402.

² Milnes. *Op. cit.* p. 40.

³ *Ibid.* p. 45.

but 'shall make them wholly of one leather', and so on.

In the department of buying and selling for profit the giving of short weight or the selling of inferior drink or food for consumption, was severely punished, and inspectors were appointed to bring delinquents to judgment.

'Woe to the vintner', writes J. S. Jusserand,¹ 'who was detected meddling in any unfair way with his liquor; he might experience the chastisement inflicted upon John Penrose, who, for such an offence was sent to the pillory in 1364, had to drink publicly there his own stuff, to have what he could not drink poured over his head, and was besides sentenced to renounce his trade for ever.'

Speaking of this period, Mr. Coulton says²: 'The determination, too, steadily evinced by the civic authorities, that every trader should really sell what he professed to sell, and that the poor, whatever their other grievances, should be protected in their dealings against the artifices of adulteration, deficient measures, and short weight, commands our approval.'

This appreciation and insistence on quality, in the first place, among the workers in 'misteries', and secondly among the vendors of commodities in the open market, was almost universal in Europe. 'The dominant preoccupation,' says Funck Brentano, in his *History of the Middle Ages in France*,³ 'common to the statutes of the most diverse corporations, is to assure the fairness of the manufacture and the excellence of the merchandise sold. Thus, so that there should be no deceit a number of crafts prescribed working on the street front, in sight of passers-by.'⁴

¹ *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 235 (note). See also G. S. Coulton, *Chaucer and His England*, p. 91. ² *Op. Cit.* p. 128. ³ English translation (W. Heinemann, 1922), p. 344.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 344.

(This was also true of England.) 'The statutes of the saddlers only authorise the entire completion of a saddle when it is to be sold, so that the client may see the solidity of the work before the ornamentation is proceeded with, the painting and varnishing which could hide defects.'¹ The same rule occurs in other trades. In the statutes of the cooks we read: 'No one should cook geese, beef, or mutton, if these meats are not of good quality and with good marrow. No one should keep for longer than three days cooked meats which are not salted. Sausages must not be made except from good pork.'² The makers of tallow candles declare that 'the false manufacture of tallow candles is too harmful to poor and rich, and too shameful',³ and so on.

The inevitable relation of time and quality, and vice versa, seems to have been known to the most ordinary people. And what does this knowledge amount to? Is it not the recognition of the fact that everything that has quality requires time for its production, and nothing that exists can endure for any time without quality? Thus the apprentice system, which prevailed all over England, France, and Germany, became an indispensable part of this aristocracy of labour. The usual time insisted upon was seven years.⁴ The idea of quality penetrated to the lowest strata of the population. The discipline which the constant concern about quality imposed, was everybody's discipline. Production and commerce was not thought of without it. And when it is remembered that these workers in the various crafts, like their predecessors in ancient Egypt, and like their fellow workers in modern India, tended to keep their trade or 'mystery' in their families, and, moreover, to marry their sons and daughters, if

¹ *Ibid.* p. 345. ² *Ibid.* ³ *Ibid.* ⁴ Milnes. *Op. cit.* p. 47.

possible, within their trade, it is obvious that in the system to which they belonged, there must have been a steady cultivation of character, capacity, and innate predisposition for a particular calling, of which we in modern England can have no conception. It amounted to an aristocracy of labour, an aristocracy from which the higher social strata in the country could constantly be reinforced and refreshed without thereby being debased. Men like Wolsey and Shakespeare were the outcome of it. And on the accumulation of individual strength and ability to which it led, England probably owes the whole of the greatness with which she completed the nineteenth century. By that time, it is true, the system had long been broken up, but it had produced such a store of quality that its effects lasted long after it had expired.

The fact that the earliest guilds were religious guilds, points to their inspiration under the influence of the Church, and there can be no doubt that the power of the Holy Catholic Church, in itself an aristocratic institution with a strict hierarchy, although deprived of the advantages of blood descent, was largely responsible for the organisation of labour and trade, as it was for the greater part of the life of the Middle Ages. Despite its non-Pagan creed, it is a commonplace of historical criticism to say that it retained much of what was valuable in the classic world, and among the things it transmitted, was undoubtedly the insistence upon quality.

The elementary principle that nothing lasting can be produced if those who produce it have no eye, no sense, for quality, was part of the classic tradition. It is certainly implicit in the way the classic craftsmen set about their work. Permanence, which was the aim of Greece and Rome, was achieved to the extent to which this principle was observed. And, although

nowhere was it observed as strictly as in ancient Egypt, and no creations have been as permanent as Egyptian creations, yet the Greeks and the Romans so far continued the Egyptian tradition as to produce many permanent things.

Nor is it beside our point, as Conservatives, to consider what this virtue of permanence depends on in the productions of the classic world, whether in thought or material things. For, if to conserve and to preserve depend upon the prevalence of qualitative values, and classic principles are known to have secured for the ancient world a high degree of relative permanence, there must be something to learn from an examination of the meaning of the word 'classic'. The very fact that we apply the word 'classic' to a work that has survived many generations and promises to survive a large number more, demonstrates how closely the word 'classic' is associated in our minds with permanence and that which survives the ages. It is therefore most important that Conservatives should be clear about what it means; for they are concerned primarily with the problem of permanence.

Now I suggest as a working definition of the classic—*that which is real*, in the sense that it is based on eternal and universal laws. That which survives, whether in thought or in material form, must be real, that is to say, it must depend on nothing transitory or fantastic. A thought peculiar only to one phase, or to one localised manifestation of human development, is not real in this sense. It appeals to the temporary mood only of a few people who pass away, probably never to return. Thus, in material productions, the building which depends, as the classic building does, wholly upon the eternal law of gravity, is real in the sense that the principle on which it is constructed is true for all time. It is what one might

term permanently valid. The straight downward pull which keeps the Temple of Theseus still standing in Athens, cannot, as far as we know, be altered by time. This temple, which is still almost perfect, is constructed on a straightforward understanding of weight, stress and support. There is no play, no possibility of play. Dead weight is supported vertically by adequate props in this structure, and, short of a bombardment, like that which destroyed the Parthenon, nothing can move it. The reality of this building depends on its relation to an eternal law—a law, that is to say, that will always apply—gravitation. Given the durability of the stone used, and the temple becomes permanent.

In the grandfather clock modern man has discovered a timepiece which, for relative permanence, must excel the bracket clock for all time. Why? Because the grandfather clock depends for its durability as a reliable timepiece on two eternal laws—those of gravitation and of the pendulum, which are utilised in the most direct manner possible, whereas the bracket clock, depends only on one eternal law—that of the pendulum. In the bracket clock the supplanting of the action of gravitation by a spring whose resilience is ephemeral, man has discovered something less permanent, less classic, less real than the grandfather clock. If the metals used in the latter could be made to survive wear, it would go on telling the right time for ever. The only help it requires is to have its weights readjusted once a week, whereas the bracket clock requires repeated help. It has to be wound up and it also requires the periodical renewal of its mainspring, which tends to lose its resilience. Moreover, during the gradual process of depreciation in the resilience of the mainspring, which is constant, it requires repeated correction.

Thus the mainspring introduces an accidental or fantastic factor, which makes the bracket clock relatively less permanent than the grandfather.

In thought we can trace the same principle. The classic or realistic thought is that which survives because it is in harmony with some eternal law of the human mind. It cannot fail to appeal to each succeeding generation of humanity, because it is eternally valid. Æsop's fables are eternally valid. Some of Plato's and Aristotle's writings are eternally valid. The eighth book of *The Republic* contains probably the greatest number of eternal truths that have ever been packed into one political essay. It is realistic in the sense that it is capable of everlasting application. And the same might be said of much that Homer, Aristophanes, Horace and Tacitus said and wrote. Aristotle's *Poetics* contains a canon for dramatic poetry which can never be surpassed for the accuracy of its psychological analyses. It is realistic and permanent, and therefore classic; because, unless human nature changes beyond recognition, it will always be valid.

Thus in anything that is classic we may expect to discover the reality that has secured its permanence, and that reality will be the eternal law which it exemplifies and applies. Classicism is thus realism—the profoundest realism (with quality of matter, expression, material and treatment always understood in its concrete examples). And since Conservatives are concerned about the problem of permanence, they must be both classicists and realists.

But classicism is frequently spoken of as standing in opposition to Romanticism. What is meant by this antithesis?

We need only examine the products of Romanticism in order to understand it. But, first of all, it is

interesting to remember the origin of Romanticism. It was the creation of the Middle Ages. As a word its origin reveals its fantastic nature. It is derived from the old form of *roman* (*romant*) which was the earliest fictitious history or tale of Western Civilisation. The ideas it suggests are not to be separated from the age in which Romanticism was born. And what was that age? It was an age in which mankind was trying to achieve an impossible compromise, an impracticable feat—to reconcile the demands of ordinary human existence with the demands of a religious philosophy which, for all practical purposes, might have been addressed to a generation of disembodied spirits. The extreme ‘other worldliness’ of early Christianity, its ascetic ideal, its rigid negativism, had suddenly become the aspiration of a world only just roused from barbarism. The rude instincts, the rugged stamina, and the keen appetites, of humanity, still very largely unsophisticated and untamed by civilisation, were expected to masquerade as the mild virtues of heavenly angels. In attempting to carry out this feat, the Roman world, during the first five centuries of our era, had gone almost mad. The Church herself had again and again been obliged to reinterpret her doctrine less ascetically, less rigorously, and to punish a too literal interpretation of her ideal by extremists, in order to make the task of the body of her adherents more easy, more compatible with their human and physical destiny. But, as the centuries went by, the radical conflict between the Christian ideal and the life of this world, was rather assuaged than eliminated. Indeed, certain sections of the Church began to lose credit owing to the inability of her very priesthood to fulfil the conditions of her teaching. And this tendency on the part of the lay world was on the point of leading to a general

revolt, when a group of men who were members of the Church, turned the whole movement into what appeared to be a more liberal form of Christianity, and by this means prolonged the latter's life. The Reformation thus saved Christianity for a further long spell, because, while it enabled the Reformed priesthood to lead more human lives, and thus to dispense with the damaging and transparent make-believe which occasionally marred the old hierarchy, it also succeeded, by provoking a reaction, or counter-Reformation movement, in the original Church, to chasten the latter's clerical personnel, and to force them under the menace of severe competition, to set their house in order.

But what had happened meanwhile to the European populations who had striven to reconcile the two conflicting demands—that of the Church and that of Life? What was the expression of the civilisation created by this conflict?

In literature it produced the fantastic, the bizarre and wholly unreal world of *Romance*, in which the situations of the story or plot are as outlandish as the psychology is strained. This literature, which like many of the other artistic features of the period, took its origin in France, is admitted by its most friendly critics to be unparalleled for the wildness of its conceits. It consists of two elements—the lives of fantastically holy people, or the quasi-historical account of actual events, known as the *chansons de geste*. But the marvellous nature of the former colours even the treatment of the latter, and the result is such a mingling of fact with eccentric phantasy that M. Emile Faguet has claimed that the *chanson de geste* was ruined by the influence of the other style.

Speaking of this literary output, Mr. Edward Dowden says: 'Abstract ideas, ethical, theological, and

those of amorous metaphysics were rendered through allegory into art. . . . The passion for the marvellous is everywhere present.'¹

And, referring to the authors of these works, Faguet writes: 'These men are Ariostos touched with melancholy, ceaselessly preoccupied with the mysteries, haunted by dreams, seeing nature as a collection and succession of miracles.'²

It should be remembered, however, in regard to this literature, that it was only a reflection of the impossible conflict between two lives—the life of the real world and the life indicated by the ideals of the Church. Its unreality, therefore—its Romanticism, consists in the fantastic flights to which the attempt to reconcile these two worlds necessarily led. But because it was superseded and died, we must not imagine that its influence, or the elements which gave rise to it, have disappeared from our midst; as Buckle says it was able 'to enfeeble the understanding of a distant posterity'.³ Strained, unreal, fantastic psy-

¹ *A History of French Literature* (London, 1897), pp. 3-13. The author adds, 'Against these high conceptions, and the overstrained sentiment connected with them, the positive intellect and the mocking temper of France reacted.'

² *A Literary History of France* (1907), p. 28.

³ In his *History of Civilisation* (Edit. 1871, Vol. I, pp. 269-271), Buckle, speaking of the period from the sixth to the tenth centuries, says: 'The few who were able to read, confined their studies to works which encouraged and strengthened their superstition, such as the legends of the saints, and the homilies of the fathers. From these sources they drew those lying and impudent fables of which the theology of that time is principally composed. . . . These miserable stories were widely circulated and were valued as solid and important truths. . . . They willingly laid aside the great masterpieces of antiquity, and in their place substituted these wretched compilations, which corrupted taste, increased their credulity, strengthened their errors, and prolonged the ignorance of Europe . . . thus perpetuating the influence of each separate superstition, and enabling it to enfeeble the understanding of a distant posterity.'

chology is still a factor in our midst; it still colours the speculations of politicians and sociologists; and even in its modern garb this Romanticism can be recognised for what it is—that is to say, something unreal, the antithesis of Classicism or realism. We shall consider some of its modern derivatives in a moment.

In the graphic arts, as I have shown elsewhere,¹ it is possible to trace all through the early and later Middle Ages, the influence of the same fantastic conflict. The body of man is transformed by degrees into the eccentric type that seemed compatible with the unworldly ideal of asceticism. We see the Gothic figure ever more and more tenuous, more emaciated, and more morbid as the years roll on. According to a Byzantine canon of the eleventh century, the human body is actually declared to be a monstrosity measuring nine heads. All trace of Polycleitus's sane and realistic canon has disappeared. The people look so elongated, spiritual and heaven-aspiring, that it seems as if they could not even stand up, while the ugliness of their tortured features causes the spectator to wonder what could have overtaken humanity after the days of the beautiful Athenians. Wolkmann and Woermann describe the early period of mediæval art as one in which the classical cast of figure and features gets 'swallowed up in ugliness'.²

This non-vital type bears its ephemeralness stamped on its every feature. It is impermanent because it is unreal. It is the expression of a fantastic conflict, an overstrained sentiment, a false psychology.

It is, however, in the architecture of the period, that the equation Unreal-Romantic-Impermanent, finds its most convincing expression. For, in the

¹ *Nietzsche and Art*, pp. 176–183.

² *History of Painting*, Vol. I, p. 230.

Gothic edifice, all the impossible and terrible self-torture imposed by a fantastic ideal, find their counterpart in brick or stone.

'Now arches begin to tower aloft into heights undreamt of theretofore. Huge columns spring heavenwards, bearing up a roof that seems almost ethereal because it is so high. Spires are thrust right into the very hearts of clouds, and acres are covered by constructions which, mechanically speaking, are alive. Kicks from the vaulted arches against the hollowed-out walls below, necessitate counter-kicks; buttresses and flying buttresses strive and struggle against the crushing pressure of the stones or bricks of these fantastic architectural feats. All the parts of this mass of stone or baked clay are at loggerheads and at variance with one another, and their strife never ceases.'¹

This is all typical of the contest proceeding within the body of the mediæval ascetic, but architecturally it differs from the Greek or Egyptian temple not only in its lack of repose, but also in its lack of permanence. The engineer has to be called in to strut and brace with steel a structure that threatens to collapse.²

The association of impermanence with Romanticism, owing to the fact that the latter is not based on eternal laws, is a feature that clings to every aspect of non-classic or unrealistic thinking and construction, and the fundamental difference between the classic or real and the Romantic or unreal is therefore of immense importance to Conservatives, who are concerned with the problem of permanence.

It should not be forgotten that Liberalism and

¹ *Nietzsche and Art*, p. 185.

² In Westminster Abbey, which is over a thousand years younger than the Temple of Theseus, the engineer's work is visible from almost every quarter of the Church.

Jacobinism, in a very great number of their principles, are not only romantic, but can also be traced in the history of thought to the influence of the Romantic mentality and art which we have just examined. It is by the unreality, the ultimate impracticability, of the fundamental principles of Liberalism and Jacobinism that we know them—by their overstrained sentiment, their false psychology, and above all by their ignorance of the eternal laws, which, as long as humanity lasts, are likely to govern human relationships.

I shall now proceed to give a brief sketch of a few leading characteristics of the Conservative or classical ideology, and the Liberal or Romantic ideology, so that the two may be compared.

The true Conservative must be above all a realist in thought and action. And, it must be admitted that in his best examples, he has been true to type. Following the Classic and Realistic tradition, he believes in the natural hierarchy of life, that order of rank which is of nature's making, and which cannot be squared with any unreal notions about human equality. Thus, he is a supporter of order, subordination, authority and discipline. He believes in time and its relation to quality, and vice versa. He does not build on the romantic idea that greatness of any sort is accidental or independent of causation. He organises society on lines in which time and quality can work their reciprocal effect, both in human beings and in things. He very naturally inclines to a belief in good lineage, heredity and in sound and pure stock,¹

¹ Cf. Disraeli (*Coningsby*): 'All is race, there is no other truth.' And in *Lord George Bentinck* (1882, p. 331) he says: 'All is race. In the structure, the decay, and the development, of the various families of man, the vicissitudes of history find their main solution.' Disraeli is mystical and unsound in his use of the word race, as I shall show in a later chapter. But at least his mind was concerned with the

for the production of anything valuable, and has an instinctive aversion to popular control, because he cannot believe that everybody is endowed with the necessary judgment or taste to be able to decide what is his best interest.

Thus in 1692, in spite of its strong support in the country, and the fact that it well knew the advantages which it might have gained against the Whigs by the measure, the Tory Party, which was not yet sufficiently opportunist to abandon its principles, declined a Redistribution and Reform Bill. By extending the suffrage, this Bill would undoubtedly have played into the hands of the Tory Party, because the popular vote was then chiefly Tory. But the Tories nobly acted up to their principles in defeating this Bill. For although they believed in protecting the people from oppression and exploitation, they very rightly did not entertain any fantastic notions about the people's ability for self-government. By this act of folly, says Mr. Maurice Woods, 'the Tory Party prepared for itself a long domination by which the Whig corruption of the boroughs held it in impotence and subservience for the greater part of the eighteenth century'.¹ And Mr. Woods declares that 'it is difficult to speak with patience about it'. But it was not an act of folly. It was an act dictated by principle, and we should, as Conservatives, applaud it.² The same applies to the Tory attitude towards

problem of blood and stock—a statement which cannot be made of every political thinker on the Tory side.

¹ *A History of the Tory Party* (1924), p. 65.

² Later on, in 1770, the Tories again opposed the measures of reform put forward by Chatham, although it would have been to their momentary advantage to have accepted them. And when in 1785 the Younger Pitt failed with his Reform Bill, it must be remembered that in preparing it he acted more as his father's disciple than as an independent Tory.

the second Triennial Act of 1694. As they knew that they had the popular backing, what could have seemed more natural than that the Tories should have courted a frequent appeal to the country? They knew they would not lose ground by it. And yet they were opposed to the Act; and very rightly so. It was tantamount to increasing democratic control, which they knew, just as Charles I knew, would not mean an extension of the liberties of the people.¹

Again, in their attitude to the five who presented the Kentish Petition to Parliament in 1701, the Tories revealed not only the soundness of their attitude towards democratic control, but also the nature of their conception of government. It will be remembered that owing to the 'Tories' rooted dislike of English military expeditions to the Continent, certain sections of the country were rendered impatient at Louis' interference in the Netherlands and petitioned the House of Commons to support the King and to 'turn their loyal addresses into Bills of Supply'. This action the Tories greatly resented, and pleading that the constituencies had all discharged their duty when they had elected their members, and had no right to influence the House any further, sent the five who brought the petition to the Tower.

The opposition of a great Conservative, like the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, to the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867, and the Ballot Act of 1872, was thus not due to his dislike of the people, or to his inhumanity, for he was the most solicitous guardian of the people's welfare that has ever lived. It was due

¹ In his opposition to Chatham's proposals for reform in 1770, Burke, although a Whig, really expressed the Tory view, when he argued that the constitutional change would end in throwing power into the hands of the ignorant—a consequence which he saw would ultimately turn not to the advantage, but to the disadvantage of the masses.

to his Tory conviction that, provided a gifted leader of the people understands his duties and responsibilities, he is more valuable to them as a champion of their cause, than as a chosen instrument of their wayward will. This does not mean that the Conservative does not believe in liberty, self-reliance and independence. An English Conservative, indeed, must believe in these possessions; for they are characteristic of the finest qualities of the race. But in state administration liberty without knowledge or wisdom may mean disaster. The utmost liberty of the subject in his private life with the utmost guidance of his will in national politics is the Conservative ideal. Thus the true Conservative politician conceives his political activity as a responsible function of patriarchalism. He does not think it wise to allow a child to play with what it cannot understand, particularly if its national permanence is at stake.

He knows that futile change can result from unhappiness, and generally does result from unhappiness. Indeed, he is aware that 'indignation is often the mainspring of political activity',¹ and thus insists on keeping the 'people' happy. Charles I, who was probably the first great Tory, strove all through his reign to keep the people of England happy, and this aim has characterised the best Conservatives down to Disraeli, who, as we have seen, maintained that 'Power has only one duty: to secure the social welfare of the People'.² Charles I's opponents, on the other hand, who were the lineal ancestors of the Whigs and the modern Liberals and Radicals, never cared about the happiness of the people. They thought more of saving the people *malgré eux* than of securing their contentment.

The Conservative believes in private property, but

¹ A. Ponsonby: *Religion in Politics*, p. 10. ² See p. 20 ante (note).

he never wishes to divorce property from responsibility; on the contrary, the greater the property, the more he insists on its holder being aware of the duties it imposes. This is a principle that governs the whole of ancient Feudalism, and it descends through history down the Tory and Conservative line. Men like Strafford and later, Cobbet and Sadler, were believers in it, and when Thomas Drummond, Under Secretary for Ireland in 1839, declared that 'property had its duties as well as its rights', he spoke as a true Conservative, although he was a member of a Whig Government. The Conservative, as we saw in the first chapter, must take care of the character of the people, but he also believes in preserving their health, because this, in a flourishing nation, is just as much an essential part of their identity, as their natural disposition. The Jews, the Hindus, the Egyptians, held the same belief. 'A great statesman's first thought', Disraeli once said, 'must be for the health of the people.'¹

Because he believes in character, health, good taste and pure stock, the Conservative must always be opposed to miscegenation, and the flooding of his country with foreigners. If the identity of the nation is to be preserved, its people must be protected against blood contamination. Thus, although Conservatives may be courteous and hospitable to the foreigner, they ought never to allow this attitude to extend to the toleration of marriages between the people of the country and the foreigner, or to the granting of too great facilities for foreign settlers.

But, above all, the true Conservative entertains no highfalutin' notions about the alleged radical good-

¹ Wilfred Meynell (op. cit. p. 120). Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, 1330a. 'In the first place health is to be consulted as the first thing necessary.'

ness of human nature. All his political schemes, whether they deal with home or foreign relations, are always therefore conceived on the assumption that guile, egotism, acquisitiveness, venality, lust of power, abuse of power, and duplicity, are likely to be manifested by the groups of humanity concerned; and consequently, he is not prone to imagine utopias or ideal states, which, in order to be successful, must be supported and maintained by angels of virtue and self-effacement. He knows, moreover, that no class in the community has a monopoly of goodness, and never imagines, therefore, that the elevation of a particular class above another, will necessarily establish the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. His reading of human nature abides by the realism of his judgments concerning other matters, and he refuses to move from the position of a realist in order to dally with sentimental notions like fraternity and universal love, however pleasantly these notions may stir the hearts of his less thoughtful constituents.

As we proceed, we shall find to what other important principles the Conservative is committed. For the present, however, the above will suffice in order for us to make a comparison and to ask the question, why the belief in these principles should be essential to sound Conservatism. The answer is, because, they alone are found to work, they alone can be trusted to maintain and preserve the identity of a nation. It is not a matter of fancy, it is a matter of eternal law. Relax any one of these principles, alter the ideology of Conservatism, by however little, and the end, which is the preservation of the nation's identity through change, will be imperilled.

The ideology of Liberalism and Jacobinism, on the other hand, is as free from realism as anything possibly could be. Impossible, impracticable ideals,

are traditionally associated with it, and it fights Conservatism, not so much because it disbelieves in preserving the nation's identity throughout change, but because it imagines that this end can be achieved otherwise than by the observance of eternal laws. We have claimed that it takes its origin in Romanticism, i.e. the fantastic—hence the preposterous nature of its principles.

Thus it reveals a repeated neglect of sound stock and lineage; nay, it has a rooted dislike of both, and constantly tries to destroy belief in their importance. It is always in favour of elective offices as opposed to hereditary offices, as if the capricious and erring judgment of a crowd, were more reliable than the certain and unalterable laws of nature. Everywhere it seizes on those instances in history when heredity seems to have failed in human families, without considering whether the conditions which alone enable the law of heredity to operate successfully, were or were not fulfilled in the instances it adduces.¹ It flings ridicule at the House of Lords as a convincing example of the failure of the hereditary principle, without revealing to those it would mislead that for over a century the selective and not the hereditary principle has chiefly operated in composing the body of the Upper House. It points to Commodus as a proof of the unreliability of heredity, without first ascertaining the gifts and antecedents of the wife of Marcus Aurelius, or the chances which nature was given, in the case of this only child, to effect the best possible combinations of his parents' qualities.² The

¹ For an exhaustive discussion of this question and a complete vindication of heredity, see my *Defence of Aristocracy*, Chapter VII.

² Buckle is a particularly bad offender in this respect. See his *History of Civilisation in England* (Edit. 1871, Vol. II, pp. 162–163). To inveigh against hereditary distinctions and to point to the failure of European aristocracies to maintain a high level of quality, without

law of heredity is not refuted by defining it in a nonsensical way. Heredity does not guarantee that every child will be the exact repetition of its parents or the best combination of both its parents' qualities. But it does guarantee that, while every possible combination and permutation of stock qualities may be expected from it, a favourable combination of parents' qualities in one child, or in several children, is almost sure to occur if the range of possible combinations, that is to say, if the family, is sufficiently large. It is easy to refute primogeniture, but not so easy to refute heredity.¹ All we may rightly expect from heredity is this, that, just as a good racehorse is more likely to come from racehorse stock than from cab-horse stock, so a wise man is more likely to be born from wise parents than from foolish parents.

By unwisely rejecting the hereditary principle, Whigs, Liberals and Jacobins have relied on the romantic principle that virtue and character come from nowhere, and have therefore promoted, and incited the world to, a degree of miscegenation, both between stocks, nationalities, and traditional cultivated types (such as functionally distinct families like artists, skilled tradesmen, scientists, commercial men and other professionals), which has dissipated all character and nearly all capacity in every Western nation.

In the Liberal and Jacobin ideology it is a fundamental principle that every man is the best judge of his own interest, and that the cumulative effect of allowing for the fact that these aristocracies did nothing to enable the law of heredity to preserve quality in their lines, is to reveal merely unscientific prejudice against the idea of aristocracy as such.

¹ Darwin, in 1862, wrote: 'Primogeniture is dreadfully opposed to selection; suppose the first born bull were necessarily made by each farmer the begetter of his stock!' *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, Vol. II, p. 385.

everybody's directing his energies to the securing of his own interest makes a nation happy and prosperous. But nothing could possibly be more fantastic than this assertion.¹ It is not even true of the individual in his private life, how then can its cumulative effect be favourable to the nation as a whole? And yet it is on the score of this principle that democracy is largely justified. It is assumed that since each man desires his own interest, mass interests must best be served by everybody having an opportunity to register his will in regard to national policy. Lord Hugh Cecil, in endorsing this idea,² ranges himself among the Romantic thinkers of the Whig tradition, and forgets the true Tory and Conservative tradition, which, being realistic, causes those who belong to it to deny that every man is the best judge of his own interests, and to deny still more emphatically that by any conjuring at the polls every man is made the best judge of his nation's interests. Thus Burke maintains quite logically that 'the will of the many and their interests, must very often differ, and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice'.³

In the Liberal and Jacobin ideology, the principle of the equality of mankind is axiomatic. It colours the whole mentality of their thinkers, from Locke⁴

¹ See Jeremy Bentham, *Theory of Legislation*, Chapter XII: 'As a general rule the greatest possible latitude should be left to individuals, in all cases in which they can injure none but themselves, for they are the best judges of their own interest.' We agree with the first part of the statement, but take violent exception to the second and last part.

² *Conservatism*, p. 188.

³ *Reflections*.

⁴ The ingenuous manner in which Locke, arguing against Sir Robert Filmer, claims that men in Nature are equal, was only possible as a result of the ignorance of the time. 'A state also of equity,' says Locke, 'wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another, there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to

and Rousseau to the Right Honourable J. M. Robertson, and is equally fantastic with the rest of their principles. It is taken direct from the early Christian doctrines that created Romanticism; it has no basis in fact; it is contrary to nature, and it is useless as a principle, except for the purpose of creating social disorder. It is often claimed that the equality is not meant in the sense of human likeness, but in the sense of political right. Thus Locke further explains his notion of equality by saying it is 'the equality which all men are in, in respect of jurisdiction or dominion one over another, which was the equality I there spoke of as proper to the business in hand, being that equal right that every man hath to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any other man'.¹ But this also is a myth, because the realist knows that there are some men whose natures incline them to rule and others whose natures incline them to serve, and that when the latter do not enjoy a relation of subordination to some authority, the best that is in them is wasted, and their highest usefulness is lost. Besides, in practice, even this alleged equality only in political rights never ends there. It invariably transcends both in the popular and learned mind the limits of the electioneering poll,² and when Condorcet said 'a good all the same advantages of Nature, and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst the other, without subordination or subjection, unless the lord and master of them all should, by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above the other.' See *Two Treatises on Government* (Book II, Chap. II, Par. 4). It is hardly necessary to point out that this 'state of Nature' is a pure myth, and yet it was believed in by Rousseau, and came to form the basis of all Jacobin agitations. Millions of ignorant people still believe in it to-day.

¹ Op. Cit. Book II, Chapter VI, Par. 54.

² This was recognised by Aristotle. See his *Politics*, Book V, 1302 a.

law should be good for all men, even as a proposition is true for all men' (which is obvious nonsense); when Jefferson said: 'All men were created equal'¹; and when Mill claimed: 'that equality of human beings which is the theory of Christianity',² we see the principle of equality transcending the alleged limits of the suffrage or of political rights, and becoming something basic in the nature of man.

The belief in equality naturally leads to the depreciation of authority and subordination. We saw it do so in Locke, and it does so in Mill. Hence we find the latter postulating the following fantastic proposition: 'Command and obedience are but unfortunate necessities of human life; society in equality is its normal state.'³ How much more wise and profound is Aristotle's statement: 'Whatever is contrary to nature is not right; therefore if there is any one superior to the rest of the community in virtue and abilities for active life, him it is proper to follow, him it is right to obey.'⁴ Mill would have us believe that there is something abnormal and morbid about the conditions which Aristotle describes here. It is this disbelief in authority and subordination, which, in the ideology of Romanticism, Liberalism and Jacobinism, always leads to the decline of discipline; for wherever the ideology prevails discipline ceases to be upheld. And since, without discipline, it is impossible to maintain standards, the belief in the myth of human equality and the disbelief in authority and subordination ultimately lead to the loss of a nation's identity.

As, however, the tendency in the Liberal and

¹ Declaration by the Representatives of the United States.

² *The Subjection of Women*. Chapter II, Section 10.

³ *Ibid.* Section 12.

⁴ *Politics*. Book VII, 1325b.

Jacobin tradition is to undervalue the importance of health and bodily considerations (this is due to the Romantic and Christian influence which over-emphasises the importance of states of the soul and mind) we find this ideology unfavourable to national health and beauty and therefore once again unfavourable to the preservation of the nation's identity. The Puritans, who were the lineal ancestors of the commercial, urban, Whig and Liberal party in English politics, transformed, as I have shown elsewhere,¹ the nature and habits of Englishmen in the seventeenth century and later, by all manner of reforms which showed an entire lack of consideration for the body and health of the individual subject. They prepared the way for the Industrial Revolution, by inaugurating an era of bodily neglect and hostility to bodily concerns and concerns of beauty. As I shall show later, the power of the Puritans was largely the outcome of the Reformation and its sweeping changes; but at any rate, in the seventeenth century, it was they who were directly responsible for spreading an influence over England and her people which, though not slow to operate, may be said not even yet to have borne its full crop of disasters. To the Liberal-Puritan-Jacobin ideology, Disraeli's deeply serious regard for the body is something quite strange and outlandish.² It is assumed by anti-Conservative parties that the health of the nation and the bodies of the masses may be left to the care of Providence. And the fight over the Factory Acts in the nineteenth century, in which Liberals found themselves ranged

¹ *A Defence of Aristocracy*. Chapter V.

² Wilfred Meynell (op. cit. p. 140): 'He loathed levity about the only serious and mysterious thing we really know—the body.' See also Aristotle. *Politics*. Book VII, 1334b. 'The body, therefore, necessarily demands our care before the soul; next the appetites, for the sake of the mind; the body for the sake of the soul.'

against Conservatives of the type of Sadler and Shaftesbury, was prolonged owing to the inability of the Liberals to realise the importance of safeguarding the physical condition of the masses. The fact that it was an outbreak of fever in the cotton mills near Manchester which first drew widespread attention to the overwork and illtreatment of children employed in manufacture as early as 1784, and that the first important Factory Act was not passed until 1833, shows not only that the struggle turned on health considerations, but also that the Liberal opponents of the new legislation were not prepared to be moved by such considerations. It is, however, quite fantastic to suppose that a nation may be preserved if those responsible for its government pay no heed to the health of its people; and in this unconcern regarding the body, which seems to adhere to Whig and Liberal tradition, we have another example of that Romanticism which, as we have seen, is incompatible with permanence of any kind.

In its attitude to liberty, the Liberal and Romantic ideology is again as different as possible from the Tory and Conservative attitude. As we have seen, while the Tory and Conservative resist the granting of too much political liberty to the subject, because they wish to be responsible for the subject's guidance and protection, feel that such guidance and protection will always be necessary, and have no desire to shirk the responsibility they involve; and, while they wish to safeguard the individual liberty of the subject as far as possible, the Whigs and Liberals, on the other hand, are always endeavouring to relieve themselves of the responsibility of guiding and protecting the masses by giving them as much apparent political power as possible, and caring not a scrap for their individual liberty. An extreme application of these

Whig and Liberal principles, in which, unfortunately, Conservatives have very mistakenly participated, has consequently led to a condition which Mr. E. S. P. Haynes very rightly describes as follows: 'We have no individual liberty except in regard to political discussion, and even this liberty is a fraud, because it gives us no participation in the government of the country.'¹ Thus while the Liberals shirk, and have always shirked, the protection and guidance of the people, it is their fantastic belief that it is impossible to give the people too much political power. In practice, of course, this political power is negatived by the Caucus and by the 'Prætorian Guard' of the party in power, as is proved by the fact that as fast as the voting power of the people has been extended, the more determined and more highly organised has become the 'direct action' of the proletariat in the form of combined strikes. But, as an illusion, it is thought that political power amuses the people, and it certainly has the further advantage of relieving the governing class of any duty to protect or guide them.

The idea of granting political liberty to the people² and of handing over to them the control of their nation's affairs is, of course, as fantastic as any other Romantic and Liberal scheme, and in practice, it is

¹ *The Enemies of Liberty* (London, 1925), p. 138.

² I shall make no attempt here to discuss the origin of the Whig and Liberal idea of the political liberty of the subject in the writings of men like Locke and Rousseau, because it would take too long. But anyone can, at a glance, perceive the wild nature of these alleged 'philosophic' roots of popular liberty in Locke's indefensible statement that 'man is born free', which he occupies many pages in a vain attempt to support (*Two Treatises of Government*. Book II) and Rousseau's equally preposterous claim that 'man was born free and everywhere he is in chains'. (For a fuller discussion of the absurdity of this standpoint see my *False Assumptions of Democracy*, Chapter IV.)

found to work so little, that it is, as we have seen, entirely negatived by means of government machinery. Whether, however, the political liberty of the people remains a fantastic ideal or becomes a practical reality, does not effect it as a principle; and it is as a principle that the Conservative must approach it. But the Conservative, who takes the science of politics seriously, is opposed to handing it over lock, stock and barrel, to the thoughtless and frivolous masses. He believes as Burke believed, that the government of a country is 'a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any one person can give in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be'.¹ How then can the masses, with all their other pressing preoccupations, usefully employ themselves with self-government? The defender of democratic control usually argues that, where it is withheld, the intelligence of man stultifies and their capacities decline. But is it then the political activity of the average member of a democratic state that develops his intelligence? What part then does his profession, craft, or science play in this development? Do not these preoccupy him very much more? Mill, in arguing in favour of popular government, maintains that, without it, the thinking and active faculties of the people would be undeveloped. But this is the most transparent sophistry. How much of the average man's intelligence is due to his political activities? And are the people of self-governing modern England more intelligent than the people of England a hundred and fifty years ago? Mill says: 'A person must have a very unusual taste for intellectual exercise in and for itself, who will put himself to the trouble of thought when it is to have no outward effect, or qualify himself for functions which he has

¹ *Reflections.*

no chance of being allowed to exercise.’¹ But is politics the only field in which thought may find an ‘outward effect’? And who among the people did Mill imagine qualified himself for political functions? In a state without popular self-government, Mill continues: ‘nor is it only in their intelligence that they [the People] suffer. Their moral capacities are stunted. Whenever the sphere of action of human beings is artificially circumscribed, their sentiments are narrowed and dwarfed in the same proportion.’² One wonders who could possibly be taken in by such childish argumentation, of which there is too much in most of Mill’s books. What does the word ‘artificially circumscribed’ mean in Mill’s context? Are Parliamentary institutions natural? Is voting and reading party newspapers a natural function of the animal man? Did Mill really believe that the intelligence and moral nature of the average man depend for their development and health upon his foggy political cogitations, assisted by the clap-trap of the daily press?³ It is this kind of plausible reasoning that constantly confronts one in writers on the Whig and Liberal side, and we are led to believe that if only the private citizen could drop all his other occupations (which, at least when they are skilled, teach him self-discipline and enlarge his mental faculties)

¹ *Representative Government*. Chapter III.

² *Ibid.*

³ An interesting and telling example of the more sound view regarding this matter is afforded by the action of the organist of Salisbury Cathedral during the latter half of the seventeenth century. At the time when petitions were constantly being sent up to Charles II by the Petitioners and Abhorers (see p. 84 *infra*), he was asked to sign one of them, and he replied: ‘I understand nothing but music, and, if you please, I will set a tune to it, and that is all I can do for your service.’ This is the best comment from an honest man on Mill’s idea of the stultification of the popular mind in communities where the suffrage is restricted. (See Roylance Kent. *The Early History of the Tories*. London, 1908. Page 259.)

and devote himself entirely to politics, we should witness a wonderful intellectual revival. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. The fate of Athens after almost all its free male population had become whole time professional politicians and judges, shows that the activities so much extolled by Mill lead rather to intellectual besotment than to brilliance. And when we see what these Athenian assemblies did, how they behaved and how their country suffered from their amateur political deliberations, we are led rather to suspect, in opposition to the Romanticist Mill, that political activities are probably the most corrupting that a man can engage in. It requires the utmost steadfastness of character, the most extreme uprightness, and the most unwavering adherence to principle, to resist the influence which democratic politics exercise over those engaged in it. And it is by no means every man who has these natural gifts. 'Look at it as you will,' said Disraeli, 'ours is a beastly career.'¹ And it is this 'beastly career' which Mill thought so elevating to the common man that he would not have had his chance of embracing it 'artificially circumscribed'.

And this brings us to the last fundamental principle of the Whig and Liberal ideology which we shall consider. I refer to the fantastic belief in the radical goodness of human nature. The way politicians of this school speak of the 'People', of trusting the 'People', of appealing to the 'People', the way they construct their schemes as if angels and not venal, acquisitive and egotistic human beings were the object of them; and above all, the way in which they tend to speak of political abstractions which have no basis in natural, human existence, is a sign of this superficial and facile psychology. A good deal of

¹ Meynell (op. cit. p. 97).

the preference for democratic before aristocratic control is based upon the assumption that man in the aggregate is better and wiser and more trustworthy than man in small exclusive bodies selected from the best of a particular generation. And, since this is a fantastic and romantic belief, it does not work and leads to impermanence in the institutions of the State which gives it practical expression. As J. K. Bluntschli very rightly points out, the impermanence of the Athenian as compared with the Spartan constitution was due to the introduction in Athens of democratic control¹; and it must ever be so, unless we are sufficiently fanciful to suppose that men by being multiplied *ad infinitum* for purposes of State control become more far-sighted and more trustworthy than their best and rarest examples.² The truth is that the multiplication of State controllers, far from improving the control, depreciates its quality; because, since mediocrity and inferior gifts are more common than superior ones, the more widely the democratic net is thrown the more inferior becomes its ultimate

¹ See *The Theory of the State* (3rd Edition. Authorized translation, Clarendon Press, pp. 442-443). 'Solon witnessed, without being able to prevent, the victory of tyranny over the democracy which he had established with its mixture of the aristocratic elements of birth and wealth. After the fall of the tyrants, pure democracy was introduced at Athens, but it fell into obvious and hopeless collapse before it had existed a century. On the other hand, the constitution of Lycurgus maintained the greatness of Sparta for five centuries. When Sparta did fall it was because that constitution had been violated by the accumulation of wealth, by the corruption which was thus introduced, and by the demagogic intrigues of the ephors.'

² In considering the effect of ancient democracies, we ought never to forget that these democracies consisted only of the free men of the States in which they ruled, and not of the entire population. Democracy to-day, however, is not the rule of a cultivated class, but of everybody. This makes the danger to the State very much more serious.

haul in those qualities which are desirable for the proper direction of the State. But this reasoning is realistic, and sounds cold and gloomy compared with the full-throated Romantic cry: 'The People are at the helm, all's right with the world'.

Truth to tell, the traditional and orthodox Tory and Conservative position is one definitely opposed to democracy. And the idea mooted ever since the 'eighties of last century of a Tory-democratic party is thus an absurdity. Far from believing in the natural or inherent right of every individual to political liberty, the Conservative believes 'that all men are directed, by the general constitution of human nature, to submit to government, and that some men are in a particular manner designed to take care of that government on which the common happiness depends.'¹ And why does this constitute the Tory and Conservative faith in politics? Because it is the only belief that works, if the object is to preserve the identity of a nation.

The Jacobin ideology goes very much further than the Whig and Liberal in its Romantic flights. The theories of Socialism and Communism are alone sufficient to show to what extent fancy and not a sound knowledge of human nature directs the supporters of this ideology in the framing of their utopias. But since, as Burke points out, 'criticism is almost baffled in discovering the defects of what has not existed, and eager enthusiasm and cheating hope have all the wide field of imagination, in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition',² it is extremely difficult to convince people that these Utopian schemes,

¹ Viscount Bolingbroke. *On the Spirit of Patriotism* (Edition, T. Davies, 1775, p. 8). See also *A Dissertation on Parties* (same Edition, p. 208): 'Absolute monarchy is tyranny, but absolute democracy is tyranny and anarchy both.'

² *Reflections*.

which hold out what appear to be definite prospects of a paradise on earth, are built upon Romantic or unreal principles of psychology and sociology. It is true that socialistic and communistic settlements have again and again been proved a failure, owing precisely to the unreality of their psychological bases. But in the world of pure Romance it requires a good deal of this vicarious experience of failure to destroy mischievous illusions. And, as sound critical faculties are usually found in inverse ratio to emotional susceptibility, the great majority of mankind, who are chiefly emotional in their thought, are likely always to feel a certain attraction to Socialism and Communism, and to be deterred from wholly advocating them only by the amount of private property they may happen to hold.

From this brief and inadequate comparison of the ideologies of Conservatism and Liberalism, and the description of the roots from which they derive, it might be inferred that the course of each party is so sharply defined from the other that nothing could be simpler than to trace their separate policies in two consistent lines throughout history. This, however, is very far from being the case. The clash and rivalry of parties in Parliament on the one hand, and, on the other, the failure of Conservative statesmen and thinkers to maintain the high standard of realism requisite for sustaining conservatism as a practical and sound political policy, have led to much confusion and to the framing of much unconservative legislation on the part of Conservatives themselves. And the Tory reader of history is frequently astonished to find his party committing themselves to programmes and policies which are as remote as they can be from the ideology of his political creed, and therefore inconsistent with the aim of preserving the nation's

identity throughout change.

Owing either to a lack of realism or to the wish to cut the ground from under the feet of their opponents, Conservatives have too often stolen a leaf from the Liberal, and even the Jacobin book, or initiated policies which were not Conservative in spirit. And, seeing that some of the best Conservative leaders have been guilty of this practice, it is not surprising that there should be considerable doubt among the rank and file of the party, concerning the true character of their position.

For instance, throughout the last fifty years, the Conservatives have been much too prone to identify themselves with the capitalists, to whom they do not strictly belong, and have supported and even initiated legislation which has enslaved rather than emancipated the working classes, who ought always to have been regarded as their particular protégés. Instead of taking a firm stand in favour of improving the condition of the workers so that these might themselves have taken better care of their children's health and education, and by so doing have preserved that self-reliance, independence and personal freedom, which were the characteristics of the Englishmen of history, Conservatives have been too much inclined to co-operate with Liberals in a campaign of enslavement, which has consisted in keeping the condition of the poor more or less as it has always been since the Industrial Revolution, and in spending for them vast sums in doing for them in education, health, and recently in insurance, what they ought to have been encouraged and helped to do for themselves. This has altered very considerably the character of the people, and the alteration has not been an improvement. To the extent, therefore, to which Conservatives have co-operated with the Capitalistic and

Liberal Party in this change, they have been guilty of apostasy regarding the leading principles of their ideology as outlined above, and with this one great crime and blunder on their conscience (not to mention others), they can hardly hope to recover their health and vigour until they have redeemed these past errors, and attempted to come to clarity and precision concerning the true aims and responsibilities of their particular political faith.

Chapter III

CONSERVATISM IN PRACTICE

WE have seen that Conservatism finds its origin in a type of man rather than in a doctrine or a politico-philosophic faction which may embrace every type. And we have seen that this type is of a kind which, being realistic, is averse from romantic schemes inconsistent with the eternal truths of human nature and of life; is prone to set quality before quantity; and is inclined to remember above all things, the inevitable relation between time and quality and vice versa. Frequently, as in the masses, this conservative type will be inarticulate about the more recondite features of its political outlook, and will manifest its Conservatism only as a prepossession in favour of stable conditions—an attitude which lends colour to the charge of its opponents that it is merely the party in favour of no change. But in the more philosophic and cultivated sections of the population, Conservatives should be articulate about the unassailable principles on which their position is based, and when they are not so, they are a source of weakness to their fellows, and particularly to the less cultivated members of their party.

It will readily be admitted that, in order to perceive and to be guided by truths that are eternal—that is to say, in order to be realistic, a certain healthiness and normality of outlook are necessary,¹ and that these

¹ It is impossible to repeat here all I have written on the essential 'taste' of the true aristocrat, which enables him to select and reject with soundness and certainty; but the reader who is sufficiently interested may find a useful explanation of this matter in my *Defence of Aristocracy*, Chapters I, II, and III.

advantages may not be the possession of every man who is inclined to the love of quality and to the belief in the inevitable relation of time to quality and vice versa. Sick people and those who, as the result of some inner conflict, are never at peace with themselves, tend to romantic and fantastic speculations, because, in their longing to be different and to feel different they are always wishing that everything else might be different. And thus we find, throughout history, Romanticism tending to increase where circumstances conspire to produce an unhealthy population, suffering from a lack of serenity.

It is not a mere accident that, traditionally, the Tories and Conservatives of England have been the denizens of rural districts (the land) and the Whigs, Liberals and Radicals the denizens of towns (the boroughs); nor is it mere chance that further connects commerce and factory industry, and therefore urban populations with the Romantic, and agriculture and rural industry with the Realistic attitude of mind. These connections are as inevitable as the connection between vice and crime, and misery and opiates.¹ The fact that in the thirteenth century the burgess's 'want of military zeal, and humble equipment of arms', were a subject for mockery, and that the contempt for trade 'was a prevalent note' in the literature of the period,² shows that already in the earliest phase

¹ If it were pure accident that in England the Tory and Conservative Party were primarily associated with the land and agriculture, we should find that this association failed to be exemplified elsewhere. This, however, is not so. In Germany the Conservative Party, until at least 1914, was also a land and agricultural party, just as the National Liberals were the industrial party, and the political parallel with England was as complete as it could possibly be expected to be in view of the deep ethnic and social differences between the two countries. (See on this point Henri Lichtenberger, *The Evolution of Modern Germany*, p. 183.) ² Mary Bateson. *Op. Cit.* pp. 261-262.

of urban development there was that differentiation between town and country, in which the townsman cut a less dignified and less normal figure. Certainly he was often derided for his inconstancy by mediæval writers,¹ and there are many reasons for supposing that the least healthy elements in the rural populations tended to gravitate to the towns. The open air, active life of the country with its agriculture and primitive industries, while it conduced to health and to a healthy outlook in those who led it, was also a life that could not be easily led by weaklings, cripples, or men suffering from some chronic ailment. There must, therefore, have been an early tendency for these people to seek refuge and a livelihood in the nearest town, and the legal protection given to refugee villains by the boroughs, would have encouraged this practice. This, among other things, may account for a good deal of the contempt in which boroughs were held by the rural populations in the Middle Ages.

At all events, not only the open-air life of the country, but also the constant and attentive contact with eternal and natural laws, which agriculture enjoins upon those engaged in it, must have tended to rear in the rural populations a much healthier and more realistic attitude to life than that which could be cultivated in the towns, and it is not astonishing, therefore, that when at the time of the Grand Rebellion the first great national division occurred, on a great political issue, the Tory-Rural-Agricultural party should have found itself arrayed in the protection and defence of the Crown, against the Whig-Urban-Commercial-Trading party. True, Tory and Whig, as the designation of the two leading parties in the State, were not yet known; but in the two sides that fought about the person of the King, the temperament

¹ G. S. Coulton. *Op. Cit.* pp. 134-135.

and aims of these parties were already plainly discernible.

Charles I, as I have pointed out, was probably the first Tory, and the greatest Conservative. He believed in securing the personal freedom and happiness of the people. He protected the people not only against the rapacity of their employers in trade and manufacture, but also against the oppression of the mighty and the great. He was no respecter of persons when it was a matter of administering justice or discipline. He mitigated, as far as he could, the evils of local misfortunes, in the form of bad or poor harvests, by imposing duties of mutual assistance on the part of his subjects, and by preventing exploiters from drawing profit from the momentary disadvantages of a particular district. He believed wholeheartedly and sincerely in his religion and in the established Church, possessed the taste which is an essential component of the qualitative point of view,¹ and, moreover, was a determined opponent of all fraud and commercial dishonesty. In all these matters he revealed the attitude which leads to permanence, which in fact constitutes the only real way of preserving a nation's identity, and thus showed himself to be a sound and enlightened Conservative. To the modern politician it is also interesting to note that Charles I was the originator of the Tory principle of a 'blue water' policy, which aims at maintaining the supremacy of England by a powerful navy rather than by a large army; and indeed it was through his efforts in this

¹ It has been said that Charles I 'had a better taste in the fine arts and in elegant literature than any King of England before or since' (*Political History of England*. Vol. VII, p. 126), and it is certain that, whatever power England has shown in the graphic arts has been due entirely to his initiative. The pictures and statues which he was never tired of collecting throughout his anxious reign, formed the first grand art treasure that this nation ever possessed.

direction that he came to grief with the more rabid Puritans. For, although every halfpenny of the ship money he raised was spent on the navy, and ultimately enabled Cromwell to achieve his naval victories, the Puritan and Commercial party, waiting for a pretext to throw over a monarch who was busy reviving the Plantagenet ideal of monarchy as the protector of the people, seized upon the illegality of the tax as an excuse for insurrection, and thereby established their own supremacy as free exploiters of the Commonwealth.

Thus began the tradition of the Tory and agricultural party, as the supporters of the Church and of a powerful Crown, and the tradition of the Whig-Commercial party, with its Dissenting elements, as the opponents, if not always of the Church, at least of a powerful Crown. It was this latter party which was aiming at, and ultimately realised, the ideal of a tame, amenable and so-called 'Constitutional' sovereign, and which, with the realisation of this ideal, removed the one great barrier to the complete exploitation of the people.¹ Had Charles I allowed himself to be tamed and had he delivered up the country to the pack of titled and ignoble exploiters who ultimately fell upon it at his death, he might have saved his head. But he was too realistic to capitulate to the bible-thumping and fantastic Chadbands whose venal motives he only too clearly divined, and the consequence was that England lost not only her greatest monarch, but also a part of her constitution which, though of inestimable value, has never since been restored. With Charles I, the last sovereign

¹ Cf. Disraeli, *Sybil* (Longman, Green & Co., 1899), p. 488. 'As the power of the Crown has diminished, the privileges of the people have disappeared, till at length the Sceptre has become a pageant, and its subject has degenerated again into a serf.'

in the Plantagenet tradition, as defender of the people, passed away.

It is true that Charles II was restored to a position very much more powerful than that of his father, and the Cavalier Parliament with which he had to deal was both loyal and amenable. But the recovery was only short lived. Owing to the King's dissolute character and his life-long flirtation with France and Catholicism, it was impossible for his loyal followers to allow him the power he might easily have wielded, had he possessed his father's qualities; and when his brother James ascended the throne, what Mr. Maurice Woods terms 'the inherent Tory instinct for the Protestant Cause',¹ forced the Tory Party's hand and caused them very reluctantly to abandon the Crown altogether. They thus assisted their opponents in making further headway towards a 'limited' or 'constitutional' monarchy, and when once again, at the end of Anne's reign, when still very strong, they might have revived the Tory ideal and reality of a powerful Crown, their opportunity was once more frustrated by the religion of the legitimate heir to the throne. This not only shattered their party's chance for over half a century, but it also postponed, apparently *sine die* the possibility of restoring to the Constitution the full weight of the sovereign power.

George I, who could not speak English, and who communicated with his ministers in bad Latin, was obliged to refrain from attending the meetings of his Cabinet, and thus established a precedent which was virtually a constitutional change entirely to the taste of the Whigs who were in power. The Cabinet in his reign achieved complete independence, and, as he was led to distrust the Tories, because of their supposed Jacobite tendencies, he handed over the reins of

¹ *A History of the Tory Party* (1904), p. 20.

government to their opponents, who proceeded to treat him as a sort of President of a British Republic. The fact that subsequent sovereigns have abstained from attending Cabinet meetings is alone sufficient to show how seriously George I's relation to his Government modified the rôle of the Crown in British politics.

When we remember, therefore, that the Whigs were closely associated with the Dissenters and the urban and trading section of the community,¹ and that during the first half of the eighteenth century they had everything their own way, we cannot be surprised that those changes, which Charles I saw approaching, and which culminated in 1760 in the dawn of the Industrial Revolution and the complete exploitation of the people, were given every possible opportunity for development.

The monarchs who had appeared after the Restoration had shown the true Tory spirit of Charles I only in imperfect detail. Charles II, for instance, had realised the importance of the principle of identity in expansion, and had added a good deal of territory to the British possessions oversea. He was possibly the first conscious Imperialist, and had declared himself well pleased at the time of his marriage, with the accessions to the power of the British Raj which his wife brought him. He saw that they would promote trade and prosperity at home and allow for expan-

¹ See Roylance Kent, *The Early History of the Tories* (London, 1908), p. 269. 'The Whigs and Dissenters—terms which at this time were unhappily almost convertible—did in fact monopolise a large share of the business in the great industrial centres.' See also p. 270: 'How closely Whiggism and Dissent were associated with the industrial and urban population the Tory and Church party clearly saw, and they did not hesitate to say what they thought in pretty vigorous terms.'

sion.¹ In addition to Tangier and Bombay, New Jersey and New York were acquired in his reign, and by the latter territories England gained continuous possession of the east coast of America from the St. Lawrence to the frontier of Florida.² He, moreover, founded an African company to carry on the lucrative export of gold and negroes from the Guinea Coast. On the realistic side, too, as we shall see in a moment, he revealed his Tory spirit; for there can be no doubt that he encouraged learning, and was opposed to the romantic obscurantism of the Dissenters. The fact, however, that, apart from his other vices, he was too cynical to care much about the future of his people, or about their welfare, constituted him only a very imperfect Tory, and we must deplore the manner in which he lost the magnificent opportunity that was his during the protracted Cavalier Parliament, from 1661 to 1679. Although the word itself had not yet been heard of in its political application,³ this Parlia-

¹ In his instructions to Sir Richard Fanshawe, who had gone on a special mission to Portugal just before the royal marriage, Charles II wrote: 'The principal advantages we propose to ourself by this entire conjunction with Portugal is the advancement of the trade of this nation and the enlargement of our territories and dominions.' (See *Political History of England*. Vol. VIII, p. 22.)

² Pennsylvania and Carolina were also fresh colonies founded in his reign.

³ The words Whig and Tory, as the names of political parties, were not heard of until 1680, and, as every one knows, they were first chosen as terms of mutual abuse. In 1680 Shaftesbury, who had just been dismissed from the Presidency of the Council, repeatedly petitioned the King to allow Parliament to meet, and his opponents likewise appealed to the King and expressed their abhorrence at this attempt to force the King's will. The two parties were first known as Petitioners and Abhorrrers, and ultimately as Whigs and Tories. The King's party called the Petitioners Whigs, or wild Covenanting rebels, and the Petitioners called the King's supporters Tories, or Popish outlaws, who found a refuge in the bogs of Ireland and gained their living by highway robbery.' (See *Political History of England*. Vol. VIII, p. 170.)

ment did in fact represent Tory principles, and led by a sound Tory monarch, it might have achieved wonders. Finally, Charles II was not the gentleman that his father was, and in the finest Tories, certainly in the cultivated Tories, we may rightly expect to find that gentlemanly quality which is at once an honourable character and a fine sense of the duties of privilege. No gentleman, to apply a definition of Mr. Bernard Shaw's, ought to leave the world poorer than he found it, and the higher his position, the greater is his crime if he takes more than he gives. Charles II, throughout his life, however, lacked that enlightened egoism, which constrains the man of taste to grace the position of trust which he holds; and since to omit to do this has a distressing effect and is therefore not conducive to permanence, it is impossible to regard this King either as a true Tory or a true gentleman.¹

With regard to James II, it is clear that he misunderstood the nature of the function of the Crown in England. He lacked the historical sense, which would have helped him to discover that, traditionally, the monarch and people were one, and that therefore he could no more realise aims which were purely personal, against the consensus of public opinion and still hope to retain his subjects' approval, than a parent could fanatically enforce his whims and fancies on his family without forfeiting their love and trust. James had many qualities, he was in many respects a better man than his brother, and he knew the value of authority; but he was too fanatical to be a patriot

¹ To say, as Maurice Woods says (*op. cit.* p. 39) that 'Charles died, as he lived, at once a great rogue and a great gentleman,' is to state a contradiction in terms. What does the word 'gentleman' mean in this context? Obviously it means nothing. It only serves the purpose of a smart antithesis, which is not helpful, and which is also misleading.

King. 'If the preservation of the monarchy and the maintenance of a strong and concentrated government,' says Mr. Roylance Kent, 'form the basic elements of Toryism, then indeed James II, in intellect and temperament, was Tory to the core.'¹ Yes, but it was too late to try to re-establish Catholicism by a sort of *coup d'état*. The restoration of Catholicism in England could not be hastened in this way. It was then and still is, a matter of slow and piecemeal conversion; and though Charles II and his brother were, in my opinion, right in believing that Catholicism was more suited than any other religion² to governmental authority, they ought to have remembered the deep root which Protestantism had already taken in the country. By forgetting this James II alienated the Tory party, which had been prepared to do a great deal to support him.

Had William III been English by birth and reigned longer, his reign might have been an exemplary one in history. Although he was by no means such a good or gifted man as Charles I, he seems to have been more like him than was any other of the later Stuarts, and had it not been for the Tories' initial disinclination to recognise him, owing to their belief in the indefeasible Divine Right of Kings, his reign might have afforded them a particularly favourable opportunity of establishing their power. As it was, they only came into their own at the very end of his reign, and during that of his successor may be said to have reached their zenith. Then followed the eclipse of which mention has already been made, and those modifications in the

¹ Op. cit. p. 320.

² See *Political History of England*. Vol. VIII, p. 63. 'The opinion which the French ambassador, Cominges, attributed to Charles, that Roman Catholicism was more suited to absolute authority than any other religion, was held by the King with surprising tenacity.'

position and power of the Crown which, though only the accidental consequence of the two first Hanoverians, permanently altered the Constitution.

With the help of the Tories in 1760, George III might possibly have restored the Crown to that place in the Constitution, which it had enjoyed up to the time of Charles I, and which alone gave to the Constitution its health, its balance, and its capacity for achieving permanence. But, unfortunately for England, George III was not the man to play the part of the Patriot King. Instead of looking back to the Plantagenets, he looked to France and Germany for his example; and, with the image of Louis XIV and Frederick II before his mind, proceeded to reign as the leader of a party, instead of as the leader of the people. The elder Pitt could have shown him the proper way to rule as a Patriot King, by resting his authority on popular support. But George III got rid of Pitt, and thus was confirmed that tradition, already established in the two previous reigns, of a monarch separated from, instead of being one with his people.

The consequences of this new idea of monarchy have already been hinted at. That they were ultimately disastrous both to the Crown and to the Lords, is now a matter of history. But, if we wish to discover one of the fundamental causes of the wretched condition of the people in the early part of the nineteenth century, of their unscrupulous exploitation by the powerful landowners and commercial magnates, and of the total neglect of their health and happiness and welfare, until the day when independent and unofficial reformers took up their cause, we are constrained to study the degradation of the power of the Crown and of its chief function as the protector of the people, which, beginning with the Grand Rebellion, was

continued by the Whig-Urban-Dissenting-Commercial interest, to the reign of George III, and gave the pattern of modern 'Constitutional Monarchy'.

1760, however, is the date usually assigned to the first changes which inaugurated the Industrial Revolution. What did the Tories do, when once this Revolution had begun, to shield the nation from its worst consequences and to apply their party principles? Together with the aristocratic party, as I have already shown elsewhere, the Tories did very little. True, they did not come into power until later in the reign,¹ but half a century of Whig tyranny and corruption in England had established a disastrous tone in the country, which seems to have affected the whole of the possessing and governing classes; and, except for the fact that towards the end of the eighteenth century and after, the Tories, following the policy inaugurated by the Whig, Chatham, became more and more imperialistic in their conscious aims, and thus expressed that essential aspect of Conservatism which consists in providing for national expansion, there is little to distinguish them from their political opponents.

The changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution were enormous and far-reaching. The invention of Kay's flying shuttle in 1738, and of Hargreaves' Spinning Jenny in 1767, were transforming the cotton industry, and leading to a vast increase of output. The improvements of Arkwright and Crompton in 1769-1779, and Cartwright's Powerloom in 1785 led to further and prodigious developments of this industry. And when Watt's steam engine appeared in 1785, it completed the transfor-

¹ It was not till the constituencies rallied to the younger Pitt, in the general election of 1784, that the Tory Party may be said to have been recreated in full force.

mation in every department of manufacture and industry. The supply of coal in the north was so greatly extended owing to the introduction of steam engines, canals, and railroads, that in 1792 the coal-mines of Durham and Northumberland alone maintained 26,250 persons. The development of the mining industry together with the denudation of the forests, led to the use of coal in the smelting of iron; and, in a trice, the face of England was metamorphosed. Whole town and village populations were transferred from the south to the north—some in order to meet the new demand for labour in the manufactories there, others to continue their trade of iron-smelting in utterly new and unfamiliar conditions. As an example of what was happening, we may take the little town of Carron. In 1755, the whole population of this place was 1,864; in 1795 the workmen alone employed in the works were 1,000, the population 4,000, while the foundry had five blast furnaces, sixteen air furnaces, three cupola furnaces, and consumed 163 tons of coal daily.

But the catalogue of the changes which ultimately consummated the Industrial Revolution have too often been recited in detail to require recapitulation in these pages. And since we are more concerned with the social consequences of the transformation, than with the nature of the transformation itself, there is no need to enter into further particulars.

The immediate consequences, as far as the people were concerned, were: (*a*) an enormous increase in urban populations, particularly in the north; (*b*) a depopulation of the country-side; (*c*) the overcrowding of urban areas; and (*d*) absolute chaos in the methods of employment, the hours of labour, and the rules as to the sex, age, and health of the worker.

Now here were obviously many problems which

it was in the Tory traditions to tackle. The identity of the nation was threatened with change, and in many respects, the change was decidedly for the worse. The ignorant masses drawn hither and thither by the lure of high wages, were at the mercy of the employers under whom they ultimately settled. Many of these employers themselves, and certainly the taskmasters they used, were as ignorant as the workers they hired. Exploitation, great suffering, and diabolical cruelty were the inevitable results. Ill-health necessarily followed, not only as the outcome of the sudden change from a rural to an urban life, but also as the effect of the conditions in the factories, mines and mills in which the workers performed their duties. With ill-health there was degradation of mind and body. Because, whereas handwork, before the introduction of machinery, was often variegated and skilled, the introduction of machinery led to narrow specialisation, and often to a besotting simplicity of function. The division of labour alone in the production of one article, which the factory system involved, was sufficient to effect a marked alteration in the mental range and capacity of the worker. It became necessary, therefore, to supply some corrective to this besotment. Since the natural guerdon of skilled labour, which is character and intelligence, had been removed, it was a matter of extreme urgency to make good its loss by some sort of cultivation unconnected with the daily routine of life.

It will now be our task to attempt a brief sketch of what was done by the governing classes, and incidentally by the Tories, to meet the new situation created by the Industrial Revolution. And, since we cannot do this more vividly than by concentrating our attention upon certain still perplexing problems, we propose to examine the history of Health, Food,

Education, the Jews, Immigration, and Factory Legislation in this country.

But, first of all, let us recall what had been happening in England in that other half of the Tory Party—the aristocrats—who, according to our conception, ought always to be united with the Conservatives of every class, if only on the question of qualitative selection, to preserve the identity of the nation.

From the moment of the collapse of the Tory party at the end of Anne's reign, the powerful landed aristocracy ruled England as a sort of Whig oligarchy for over half a century. Using their great wealth to corrupt the towns and to maintain their ascendancy in the Commons (hence the 'pocket' and 'rotten' boroughs, which were a Whig and Liberal creation) they governed the country under the nose of a tame and almost functionless monarch, entirely for their own ends, quite regardless of their sacred duties as the custodians of its identity, and consequently neglectful of the condition of the people. They established a precedent, not only of heartless exploitation, but also of purely quantitative valuations regarding change, according to which every kind of innovation was allowed to be thrust upon the people without either question or demur. For over fifty years England was indeed a pure oligarchy, and we cannot speak of the Constitution as having functioned during this period; for the King was a figurehead, the Commons a docile body of paid employees, and the people and the Tory squires were excluded from any share in the government.

With George III's desire to rule, a salutary change did certainly come over the country. The Whig oligarchy was gradually dethroned and the Tories allowed to come into their own. But one feature remained more or less the same—the Commons

continued to a great extent as a paid body of employees, while the Tory squires themselves became not only largely infected by Whig methods of government, but, what was even more disastrous, associated with the rising, powerful, commercial and industrial element, owing to the latter's jealous hostility towards the landed aristocracy. These changes, therefore, meant little for the good of the country; for, as long as the younger Pitt leant on the powerful manufacturers and commercial magnates for support, which he was obliged to do, owing to the fact that their attitude to the aristocracy automatically ranged them on the side of the Tory squires, there grew up an identity of political interest between the capitalists and the Tories, which meant not only a continuation of the policy of exploitation and neglect, but also an unfortunate confusion of Toryism with elements quite foreign to its nature. What had Toryism to do with this new smoke-stackocracy in 1789 or at any other time? As a new power in the land the men composing it were entirely capitalistic and cared about as much for the preservation of the national identity as they cared for beauty and quality. Besides, even if it had cared for the preservation of the national identity, it had not the gifts to function as true Tories and Conservatives in this sense. The union of the smoke-stackocracy with Toryism was, therefore, as fatal to the latter as it was calamitous for the nation¹; and, since the voice of the people could not be heard, whether to approve or disapprove what was being

¹ The false but popular association of Toryism and Conservatism with Capitalism, which figured so prominently in the elections of 1905 and 1910, probably dates from this period. Because, although owing to their connection with the towns and urban populations the great Whigs soon made their peace with the smoke-stackocracy and the commercial magnates, the memory of the latter's close association with the Tories did not die out.

done for them (which is the only way in which the voice of the people can function helpfully) government was carried on, and vast changes were allowed to materialise, without anyone's concerning himself how the character, health, and welfare of the masses were being affected.

The effect of the French Revolution on this condition of things was to rivet, even more tightly than before, the bonds uniting the new propertied classes to the Tory Party, which stood for order, authority, and tradition; and the consequence was, when Mr. Grey in 1792 urged a proposal for Parliamentary Reform, Pitt refused to accept it, and in his refusal had the whole of the Tories and wealthy classes behind him. Even individuals among the common people were not allowed to express the view that Parliamentary reform was necessary; and in 1793 a common bill-sticker was imprisoned for six months for posting up an address to that effect, while a man named Hudson was sentenced to a fine of £200 and two years' imprisonment for proposing a toast to the 'French Republic'.

Had the rulers of the nation really understood the principles of Conservative and aristocratic politics at this period in history, there is no doubt that they could have established a precedent in wise rulership which would never have been forgotten. They could have averted the cry for Parliamentary Reform by proving through deeds that they were the best custodians of the people's liberties and interests; they could have averted the Trade Union movement by showing that no one could have closer to heart than they the welfare and independence of the worker; and they could have established for all time the people's trust in the governing classes, by doing what was the least that their privileged position dictated—i.e. governing

wisely in the sense defined in the two previous chapters. They had everything their own way. The Commons were not representative. The voice of the populace was silent and had been silent for nearly seventy years. There was no reading of seditious literature, because, apart from the fact that few among the masses could read, the price of newspapers was prohibitive. A tax on paper, moreover, enabled the government to check the dangers of cheap and unsound knowledge. The Church was on the side of the rulers, and the government even had the power to imprison and deport political agitators and trade unionists.¹ Never was there a more golden opportunity for displaying the fundamental principles of Toryism and Aristocracy.

What happened?

The misery of the people ultimately compelled the people to seek their salvation in self-government. That is the best comment on the way in which Toryism availed itself of the chance it had been given towards the close of the eighteenth and during the first decades of the nineteenth centuries. 'The chief propelling power of democracy in England,' says J. Holland Rose, 'was misery.'²

I have briefly indicated the vast changes that took place after 1760 in England. At the time of George III's accession, the population of England and Wales was about 6,000,000; in 1801 it was 9,000,000; and

¹ It was not until 1824 that, under a Tory government, the laws against workmen's combinations were repealed. But there would never have been any need of workmen's combinations if the governing classes had in the sixty years, between the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, and the end of the Liverpool Ministry, realised their responsibilities, and the immense advantage of protecting voluntarily over the ignominy of being forced by the working population to allow them to protect themselves.

² *The Rise of Democracy.*

by 1821 it was 14,000,000. Almost the whole of this increase was concentrated in towns and urban districts, which were quite unadapted for this huge multiplication of their inhabitants, and the consequence was that, owing partly to the overcrowding and partly also to bad sanitary conditions, the health of the community began seriously to suffer.

Up to the time of the Grand Rebellion, when the King was still the protector of the people, the health of the nation and its welfare had been the object of constant government concern. It was the princes in the Middle Ages who, without any of our medical knowledge to guide them, extirpated leprosy in Europe. The measures adopted were frequently what we, with our modern sentimental tendency to sacrifice the greater for the less, would consider harsh and cruel¹; but if as realists our duty is to consider the sound and healthy first, then obviously it is impossible to be considerate in regard to a small minority of people who are a danger to the rest of the community. At the present day the number of the sick is so great and so unwieldly, owing to our sentimental tendency to consider them first, that the sound are steadily being crushed out of existence. At all events, to speak only of the method of isolation enforced for the disease of leprosy in the Middle Ages, it is generally admitted that this was triumphantly successful; and, by the end of the sixteenth century, leprosy had died out at least in northern Europe. Even in regard to the so-called 'black plague', the Kings of Europe in the Middle Ages did the best they could, according to the knowledge of the day, to ward it off and to prevent its extension. And, had they only known that rats were carriers of the

¹ For a brief explanation of some of these methods, see my *Man: An Indictment*. Chapter VI.

infection (according to Kipling they seem to have known this, but I have been able to find no confirmation of his view), their system of quarantine would have been perfectly efficient.

We also find such matters as the pollution of the Thames meeting with official notice as early as 1345, and the tradition of cleanliness in village and town streets must have been well established, because we know that the common people, who were represented in Wellington's army in Spain from 1808-1812, inherited this tradition, and astonished the Spaniards by their care of the streets in which they were billeted. Besides, we have historical evidence that punishments were meted out to polluters of streets and thoroughfares certainly as early as the sixteenth century; for, in the Court of Rolls of Stratford-on-Avon there are the records of two prosecutions of Shakespeare's father (one in 1552 and another in 1558) for depositing filth in a public street. It is possibly true that the inside of the houses may not have been particularly clean, but in this connection we must allow for the powerful tradition of individual liberty in England all through history, or at least up to the time of the Commonwealth, and we must therefore assume that great personal latitude was allowed in this matter.¹ Probably, however, the last government, before the nineteenth century, that paid sufficient heed to the health and sanitary condition of the people, was that

¹ In a letter from Erasmus to Cardinal Wolsey's doctor, the state of the English house in the sixteenth century was described as follows: 'As to the floors, they are usually made with clay, covered with rushes that grow in the fens, which are so slightly removed now and then, that the lower part remains sometimes for twenty years together, and in it a collection of spittle, vomit, urine of dogs and men, beer, scraps of fish and other filthiness not to be named.' (See Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, *The Evolution and Significance of the Modern Public Health Campaign*, 1923, p. 7.)

of Charles I, after the dissolution of the Third Parliament in 1629. Quite apart from the severe enforcement of the laws against fraudulent retailers of food-stuffs, the repeal of the Sunday observance laws in 1633 was a fine attempt to defeat the Puritan design to depress the nation's spirits by forbidding games on the one day on which the poor could play and enjoy themselves; while the proclamation issued on June 5th, 1634, against 'that great annoyance of smoak which is obnoxious to our City of London', showed how far the King was aware of the injury that was done both to the beauty and health of the city by a nuisance which, even in those days, was already sufficiently serious to attract attention.

But from that time onwards little seems to have been done to shield the people of England from the consequences of the vast changes that took place during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the fact that, despite the enormous increase of the population and the resulting overcrowding in urban areas to which reference has already been made, at the time when Victoria ascended the throne, public health was virtually unrecognised by the legislature, shows the extent to which the governing classes, both Whig and Tory, had neglected their sacred duties.

It is true, that in 1774, a government that was largely Tory passed two acts for the securing of better sanitary and health conditions in prisons, but although the reforms were badly needed, they effected nothing for the mass of the people. And, when Victoria became Queen in 1837 the Statute Book contained only one Act providing for quarantine, and a measure for the granting of £2,000 annually by Parliament for the support of a national Vaccine Board.

No further comment is required upon the Tory administrations that had witnessed the enormous

changes of the Industrial Revolution. And we cannot be surprised that this total neglect of one of the fundamental principles of true Conservatism by the only party that professed to know what Conservatism meant, went a long way towards associating Toryism and its natural ally, Aristocracy, with the ruthless attitude of Capitalistic enterprise in the public mind. It was not until the epoch-making report on the sanitary condition of the labouring population of England in 1842 that the country realised how extremely bad conditions were. But, although this report and the measures to which it led came to light under a Conservative government, it was to the initiative and energy of two private individuals that they were chiefly due.¹

In 1843 a Special Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into the health of large towns and populous districts, and the report of this Commission in 1844-1845 is said to have started the movement for water supply and sewerage throughout the world.

Nevertheless, eighty years had elapsed since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. In that period the population of England and Wales had trebled itself, and there had been nine Tory administrations lasting in all over half a century. Obviously then, neither the Tories nor the Aristocrats had understood one of the most elementary of their duties—the care of the body and of health among the people—and they had been steadily paving the way for that class of reform which, instead of issuing from the heads of wise leaders, arises from popular discontent and revolt.

What happened subsequently to 1845 may now be briefly summarised. In 1848, under a Liberal

¹ It was Sir Edwin Chadwick and Sir John Simon who started the sanitary awakening.

Government, a General Board of Health was formed, to which Chadwick, Dr. Smith, and Lord Ashley belonged, and it lasted six years. It is said to have been broken up through Chadwick's impossible temper. In 1855, under another Liberal Administration, a new General Board of Health was instituted to which the famous surgeon and sanitary reformer, Sir John Simon, was summoned to fill the newly created office of Central Medical Officer; and in 1860, under a Conservative ministry, led by Lord Derby, the Sanitary Act was passed. Under this Act large powers were given to local authorities, and obligations were imposed on them to suppress all kinds of nuisances, and to provide all such works and establishments as the public health required. This Act also imposed restrictions on the sale of poisons, and made it a public offence to sell adulterated food or drink, or medicine, or to offer for sale any meat unfit for human consumption. It made provision for gratuitous vaccination to every claimant, and prescribed certain well defined duties for local authorities in the case of epidemic outbreaks and other emergencies. It was a measure that did credit to the Conservative administration responsible for it; but the fact that it came so late, and may be regarded as the result of an agitation largely conducted by private individuals who began their campaign much earlier in the century, points to two inevitable conclusions: (*a*) that the concept of sound Conservative government had greatly degenerated; and (*b*) that the legislature in England had acquired the vice, which was Whig in its origin, of ruling like bigots who are only stirred into hasty and often unenlightened action by popular disturbances and agitations.¹

¹ This is reminiscent of Macaulay's famous words in his fourth speech on the Reform Bill: 'Reformers are compelled to legislate

Subsequently to this Act of 1866, a large number of other measures were passed, extending or elaborating its principles. The Public Health Act of 1875, which was passed by Disraeli's second administration, for instance, widened the application of previous acts; in 1888, under Salisbury, certain powers were given to County Councils; while in 1894, under a Liberal administration, Rural District Councils in rural areas were endowed with special authority. But it cannot be said that these further measures did anything more than to extend the principle of the original acts, and it was not until 1912, when in imitation of Bismarck's policy of the year 1855, Mr. Lloyd George carried through his Insurance Act, that a new principle was introduced. I shall leave my criticism of both the Conservative Act of 1866, and of the later Liberal Act of 1912 to another chapter; for the moment I must deal with the question of Food.

In the previous chapter I referred to the prevalence of qualitative valuations in England throughout the Middle Ages, and I showed how this state of affairs affected the work of craftsmen, controlled their guilds, and was also extended to the question of food supply and food preparation. As early as 1203 a proclamation was made throughout the kingdom, enforcing the legal obligations of assize as regards bread, and by the Act, 51 Henry III, Statute 6, the public were protected from the dishonest dealings of bakers, vintners, brewers and others. I have already mentioned how severe were the punishments meted out to those who infringed this law, and similar laws on the Continent¹

fast just because bigots will not legislate early. Reformers are compelled to legislate in times of excitement, because bigots will not legislate in times of tranquility.' (See *Macaulay*, by J. Cotter Morrison (London, 1882), p. 22.)

¹ See pp. 40-41 ante. According to the *Liber Albus* (Trans. by

and as late as 1634, we find tradesmen being sent to the pillory for dishonest dealing owing to the severity which Charles I encouraged in the application of the Statute. With the overthrow of Charles I's government, the Puritans, who were chiefly prosperous tradesmen, put an end to all the close supervision of food and drink that had been operative before, and from that time onward, until the year 1709, when 51, Henry III, Statute 6, was repealed by a Whig ministry, the supervision of the trade in food and food preparations for the benefit of the consumer fell into complete disuse. In my *Defence of Aristocracy* I have collected the evidence pointing to the evil effect which this decline in supervision had upon the old drink of England; but the effect on the quality of food was equally deleterious, and the best proof we can have of the obsolete nature of the laws relating to this part of the life of the people, is the repeal of Henry III's valuable statute in the reign of Queen Anne.

So far then, the neglect of the nation's food may be regarded as a Puritan-Tradesman-Whig tradition. What happened later?

H. T. Riley, p. 232), 51 Hen. III, Stat. 6, was being severely enforced under Edward I, for we read: 'If any default shall be found in the bread of a baker of the city, the first time, let him be drawn upon a hurdle from the Guildhall to his own house, through the great street where there may be most people assembled, and through the great streets that are most dirty, with the faulty loaf hanging from his neck. If a second time he shall be found committing the same offence, let him be drawn from the Guildhall through the great street of Chepe in the manner aforesaid to the pillory, and let him be put upon the pillory and remain there at least one hour in the day. And the third time that such default shall be found, he shall be drawn, and the oven shall be pulled down, and the baker made to foreswear the trade within the city for ever.' To our sentimental modern feelings, this sounds very cruel, because we are more inclined to pity the baker who swindles and is punished than the crowd who eat impure bread as the result of his dishonesty.

Little, or rather nothing, was done to protect the nation against the dishonesty of those dealing in the vital commodities for about 150 years, *and during that time the Tories with long spells of office had ample opportunities of intervening.* It is true, that as early as 1725, there was an act passed by the Whigs against the adulteration or 'sophistication of tea', and this was followed in 1730-1731 and 1766-1767 by further measures, the last of which increased the punishment for tea adulteration. But like the Whig and Tory Acts against coffee adulteration, of 1718 and 1803 respectively, and like the Tory Act of 1816, against the adulteration of beer, these measures can hardly be said to have affected the vital pabulum of the people, and were passed chiefly in the interest of the inland revenue, who looked only after dutiable articles.

Nevertheless, a certain measure of protection was afforded to the public by the Tory Act of 1816, against the adulteration of beer, for we find that it was not until 1847 that a Liberal Government allowed the brewers to darken the colour of worts or beer by means of a concoction of their own supposed to be made from sugar.

Apart from these acts, however, we must understand that nothing whatsoever was done after the repeal of the Act 51, Henry III, Statute 6, to place the public in anything like the same advantageous position that it had enjoyed under the Plantagenet Kings; and in this department alone, therefore, we are entitled to regard the whole of the movement of alleged 'Progress' covering a century and a half as a slow process of decline from the Middle Ages to our own Muddle Age.

It was not until a purely independent and unofficial organ, the London *Lancet*, opened its Analytical

Sanitary Commission in the middle of the nineteenth century, that the public and the government were roused to the appalling state of affairs existing in the food supply of the nation; and although great credit is due to this private concern for starting the agitation, we, as Conservatives, cannot but deplore that the initiation of the enquiry owed nothing to the political party to which we claim allegiance. The fact that the Whigs had done nothing does not surprise us; for, apart from the fact that the neglect of food questions was in the Puritan-Whig tradition, it has never been claimed for this party that it aspired to the realism which compels an earnest concern about the health and character of the people. It is, of course, fantastic to hope to run a nation and to preserve its identity without having a regard for its health, and therefore for the purity of its food; but, as we have already shown, the Puritan-Whig-Liberal tradition was fantastic and not realistic. The remissness of the aristocrats, Tories and Conservatives in this matter, however, was unpardonable, and it inclines us to wonder whether anything like a true Tory or Conservative¹ attitude had ever been a reality after the death of Charles I.

The facts, published by the *Lancet* Analytical Sanitary Commission, revealed such an appalling state of affairs, that the nation was horrified. And, seeing that the paper was brave enough to publish the names and addresses of hundreds of manufacturers and tradesmen who were selling adulterated foods, drinks and drugs, the government could not long refrain from action. As an example of some of the facts revealed, we may recall that of 34 samples of coffee 3 only were pure (this in spite of the acts mentioned above); of 34 samples of chicory, 14 were

¹ This term as the official designation of the old Tories had come into use about the year 1830.

adulterated; of 49 samples of bread, every one contained alum, and of 36 samples of milk 14 were found to be adulterated.

In spite of its jealous care of vested interests the Liberal administration in power at the time was forced to take action, and in 1855 a Commission was appointed, the report of which led in 1860 to the Adulteration of Food and Drink Act, also a Liberal measure. As, however, the Act left it optional to the district authorities to appoint analysts or not, and did not provide for the appointment of any officer, whose duty it was to obtain samples, the act frightened nobody, and it left things exactly as they were. In 1872, again under a Liberal Government, a further Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act was passed, which empowered inspectors to purchase samples for analysis. As, however, the appointment of inspectors remained optional, the benefits of the act were not widely felt, and outside London and a few large towns nothing was done and but few offenders were apprehended.

The first useful act that was passed was certainly Lord Beaconsfield's Food and Drug Act of 1875, which made the appointment of analysts compulsory; but how late it was, and how many evils it left untouched! It was followed in 1879 by an amending Act, and in 1887 by a further Act dealing especially with the sale of margarine, both of which measures were passed by a Conservative government. But the kind of punishments that were meted out for an infraction of the Act were, and remain to this day, quite inadequate, for the huge profits obtained by means of adulteration, make the fines imposed almost negligible except to the small retailer.

What followed is a matter of recent history. In 1894 a select committee was appointed to investigate

the working of the Food Acts, and in 1899, under a Conservative administration, the Sale of Food and Drugs Act was passed. Other Acts were the Butter and Margarine Act of 1907 (Liberal) and the Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act of 1915¹ (Coalition), and the Licensing Act of 1921, which lowered the alcoholic strength of brandy, whisky and rum.

But the food conditions of the country are still, in spite of all these measures, in a very deplorable condition. Patent and Proprietary foods, often of doubtful quality and utility, poor and lifeless beer, noxious food substitutes of all kinds, meat of bad quality, bread of little nutritive value, and inferior jams and preserves of all kinds, still call for the serious attention of the legislature. And when it is remembered that a large number of the proprietary foods are advertised as suitable for infant feeding, the damage that is being done by the indiscriminate use of these commercialised foodstuffs cannot be sufficiently emphasised. In addition to this, however, we must also consider the enormous business that is now being transacted in the sale of patent and proprietary drugs and medicines, over which there appears to be no control whatever. And, since these products are widely advertised and appeal particularly to the ignorant, the demand for public protection in this matter is extremely urgent. To show how difficult it is, however, to make any headway against large vested interests even in our modern 'enlightened' House of Commons, it may be interesting to quote the following report from the *Times* of the 5th May, 1925:

'Sir Kingsley Wood, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health, answering Mr. Groves (Stratford, Lab.) said: "The Minister of Health is aware that

¹ This was ultimately postponed till September, 1925, and was temporarily replaced by the much abridged Amendment Act of 1922.

misleading claims are sometimes made as to the value of infants' foods, consisting largely of starch, but he is not satisfied, on the information at present before him, that there is sufficient evidence of danger arising to public health to justify the issue of regulations at the present time." Mr. B. Smith (Rotherhithe, Lab.) asked whether the hon. gentleman would circulate through the medical side of the Ministry of Health the names of firms who largely embodied starch¹ in so-called foods? Sir Kingsley Wood: "I do not see the necessity to do that. The consumption of these proprietary foods is decreasing."²

'On the subject of patent medicines, Sir Kingsley Wood, in answer to Mr. Day (Southwark, Central, Lab.) said: "The Minister of Health fully appreciates the importance in the interest of public health of securing some statutory regulation of the conditions under which patent medicines are advertised and sold, but in the present state of business he does not anticipate that it will be possible to introduce legislation on this subject during the present session." Mr. Day asked whether the hon. gentleman appreciated the fact that many of these patent medicines contained injurious ingredients, and that the public took them a little too freely, not knowing what they contained? Sir Kingsley Wood: "That may be so, but the difficulty is to arrange business so that this legislation can be taken." Mr. W. Thorn (Plaistow, Lab.):

¹ He might have added sugar and other carbohydrates often to the extent of 25 per cent.

² As is also, I presume, their advertising energy? Seeing that breast-feeding is declining all over the country (for evidence of this see *Man: An Indictment*, Chapters VI and VII), it seems singular that the sale of these infant foods should be declining also. At all events, the question really is, not whether their sale is declining, but whether their present scale of sales, however much lower this may be than it was five years ago, should be allowed at all.

“Has the hon. gentleman ever been in the market place on Saturday night, and listened to the persons who sell their medicines, and seen how easily people could be chloroformed in this direction?” Sir Kingsley Wood: “And in other directions too. (Laughter.)”

Now the interesting feature of these questions is that a body of men, wholly consisting of Labour representatives, are seen to be taking the realistic and Conservative view of their duties as members of the legislature, while the government that cannot find time for dealing with these urgent questions, is a Conservative body. And what was the business which was so pressing that it must take precedence of the vital matters which were the concern of Messrs. Graves, Smith and Day? It consisted of a vote-catching measure, not in the least Conservative in spirit, which has become notorious as the Pensions' Bill.

In regard to Education, the record is, I am afraid, not very much better. Being realistic and classical in spirit, true Conservatives always should believe and always have believed in cultivation and exact science, as opposed to besotment and clap-trap. Their lineal ancestors, the Cavaliers, had, as Macaulay claims, ‘more profound and polite learning than the Puritans’, and Mr. Roylance Kent declares that ‘the Puritans as a whole were not favourable to learning’.¹ Indeed the doctrine that ‘carnal knowledge’ was worthless and inconsistent with piety was held by extreme Protestants both in England and Germany all through the seventeenth century, and it was this doctrine which led the Barebones Parliament to propose the suppression of the English Universities. On the other hand, it is proverbial that the Royal Society, in

¹ Op. cit. p. 54.

its inception, was a thoroughly Tory institution. The King was its patron,¹ among its Fellows were men like Evelyn, Dryden and Pepys, and, as Mr. Roylance Kent points out, 'some of the greatest adherents of the new learning were ordained clergymen of the Church of England, an ecclesiastical institution which was Tory to the core'.²

The beginning of the Tory tradition seems, therefore, to have been, as we should expect, favourable to learning. When the Tories first appeared, however, the educational institutions of the country were still reeling under the shock of the Reformation, and very little had been done to mend the havoc that had been wrought. The fulminations of the German reformers against the universities as the homes of the hated Catholic theology and philosophy, had found reverberations in these islands, and, together with the secularisation of ecclesiastical property, which too often absorbed the endowments of the schools, had led to the disappearance of the majority of grammar schools, or to their continuation only on a much diminished scale. Erasmus had declared that when Luther arose learning declined, and he was right.

Under the Commonwealth, therefore, we must think of these islands as sunk into the lowest depths of ignorance and degradation, and no attempt was made to raise them out of this appalling condition. Hook, who appears to have been a royalist, certainly urged the establishment of a universal system of elementary schools, giving instruction in the vernacular; but he was sequestered by the Puritan Parliament after becoming Rector of Great Ponton in Lincolnshire, and his scheme was never realised. The only

¹ Charles II, who had a peculiar taste for scientific pursuits, was also the founder of the Observatory at Greenwich.

² *Op. cit.* p. 52.

educational suggestion, on the Puritan side, appears to have come from one Petty, but it is characteristic of the trading and commercial spirit of his party, that his proposal was limited to the establishment of elementary trade schools.

The first fruitful effort made to remedy the disastrous state of affairs was due to a Tory called Dr. Bray, who, in 1699, founded the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, and to this movement are due the numerous 'charity' or 'Blue Coat' schools scattered plentifully all over the country. But it should be remembered that whereas religious teaching formed an essential part of the curriculum in these schools, their object was also to provide elementary education in other subjects, and on this account Dr. Bray's activities were extremely valuable. Nevertheless, we must note in passing, that Dr. Bray, though a Tory, was, after all, only a private individual, and that his political party can hardly be credited with the initiation of a movement which was his and his only.

Thus matters remained until the end of the eighteenth century, when suddenly the appalling degradation of the masses, accentuated by the besotting factory labours they were now called upon to perform, provoked a number of quite unofficial movements.¹ There were the Sunday Schools started in 1780 by Thomas Stock and Robert Raikes. The peculiar value of these schools was that they combined secular with religious instruction, and their organisation was assured in 1785 by the creation of

¹ Speaking of the state of affairs in Education before George IV's first Parliament, Mr. Henry Brougham said there were 3,800 parishes or chapels in England which had not a vestige of a school, and the people had no more means of education than the Hottentots or Kaffirs.

the Sunday School Union. They taught reading, writing, simple arithmetic and accounts,¹ and their success was so great that they were found springing up everywhere. There were also the Whig Quaker, Joseph Lancaster, with his proposal for an undenominational system of elementary education; the Whig, Mr. Whitbread, with his Parochial Schools' Bill in 1807, which was thrown out by the Lords; and the Tory, Bell, who proposed a universal system of education under the supervision and control of the parochial clergy. His proposal failed through Dissenting opposition, but Bell was ultimately made the head of the National Society for Providing the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church.

In 1831 there were 13,000 schools in connexion with the Church, and the whole of the educational institutions of the country were in private hands, depended on private support, and may be said to have been created by the energy of private individuals. But even these subject attempts at grappling with the problem were shown by Henry Brougham's Commission,² started in 1816, to be greatly hampered and stultified by the landlords and clergy of the different parishes, for it was discovered that the charity schools throughout the country were not only monopolised by these gentlemen, but also that they were actually embezzling the ample revenues provided for the upkeep of these institutions.

The outcome of Brougham's investigations was that he introduced a Bill in 1820 to provide for popular education by means of a school rate for England. This Bill is said to have failed owing to the opposition of the Dissenters, but at all events it

¹ J. W. Adamson, *An Outline of English Education*, p. 9.

² Brougham was a Whig.

ought not to have been looked upon kindly by the Tories, because it involved a bad principle.

It was under a Whig Government, the same as that which passed the first Reform Bill of 1832, that the first grant of £20,000 was made for public education, and from that day to 1870, National Education in England continued to be a matter of State-aided voluntary effort. The grant was administered by the National and the British School Societies,¹ and was steadily increased until in 1865 it stood at £636,800. Lord Melbourne's government established a separate education office in 1839, and in 1849; under another Liberal Government, State-aid was extended to Wesleyan and Catholic Schools.

So far, apart from the private efforts of men like Bray and Bell, the principal contributions made towards solving the problem of National Education, were thus the work of Whig governments. We may not approve of the ways and means chosen, but at any rate, to mention only Brougham's work, the interest shown and some of the reforms instituted, did more credit to the Whig legislators than to their Tory opponents. It is true that in Sir Robert Peel's Factory Bill of 1802, provision was made for education classes for the benefit of children in industry²; but the Bill introduced by Sir James Graham in 1842,

¹ These were 'The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church' (founded in 1811), and its rival, 'The British and Foreign School Society' (founded in 1814).

² 'The employer was, by this Act, required to provide, during the first four of the seven years of apprenticeship, competent instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and to secure the presence of his apprentice at religious teaching for one hour every Sunday. . . . But the act was unpopular, and evasion was possible by neglecting to apprentice the children or by employing boys and girls resident in the neighbourhood; and the practical effect of Peel's Act was not great.' J. W. Adamson, *A Short History of Education* (1919), p. 243.

to provide for separate denominational teaching in schools supported from the poor rate, which was only one of the many attempts made during the middle years of the century to establish a national system of elementary schools supported by the rates, was defeated by the Nonconformists, who considered it an attack on the voluntary system. It was the famous Conservative educationalist, Sir John Pakington, who was one of the principal advocates of national education on these lines.

In 1858, the Royal Commission on Education rejected the idea of free and compulsory education, in the first place because of the religious difficulty, and secondly owing to the feeling that it was opposed to the British spirit of individualism. And it is in this Commission's rejection of the idea, which was then very prevalent, that the State had the right to levy a general rate in order to enforce free education on the masses, that the first ray of hopeful light appears. Unfortunately it was only transitory, and in 1866, we find Sir John Pakington's Committee (Pakington himself being a Conservative) advocating an education rate for the establishment of a national system of elementary education. This was really a Whig policy, and in keeping with Whig tradition, and had Sir John Pakington been a sound Conservative he would have had nothing to do with it. (This point will be explained more clearly in the next chapter.)

In 1867 and 1868 Liberal statesmen continued to introduce bills for a national system of education based on municipal and parochial rating—a policy entirely Whig in its temper, and one with which Tories and Conservatives should have had nothing to do. But by now, the whole country had become interested, and the hope of a sound Conservative scheme for meeting the general need, was at an end.

In 1870, therefore, under Mr. Gladstone's first Administration, Mr. Forster introduced his Elementary Education Bill, and this measure became law. To all intents and purposes, it effected three radical reforms: it placed the building and support of elementary schools upon the rates, it instituted the principle of compulsion, and it made elementary education practically free.

It is true that in introducing the measure Mr. Forster protested that to relieve the parent of all payment for his children's education, would be to weaken the sense of parental responsibility in him, and to pauperise those who had hitherto kept themselves free from the taint of pauperism. But, seeing that he made special provision for extreme poverty, it was inevitable that in the long run the plea of poverty should be used by all those who wished to free themselves from the burden of school fees.

'We do take two powers,' he said. 'We give the School Board power to establish special free schools under special circumstances, which chiefly apply to large towns, where, from the exceeding poverty of the district, or for other very special reasons, they prove to the satisfaction of the Government that such a school is needed and ought to be established. . . . We also empower the School Board to give free tickets to parents who, they think, really cannot afford to pay for the education of their children; and we take care that these free tickets shall have no stigma of pauperism attached to them.'¹

The principles laid down in this Bill have never

¹ See *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*. Vol. CXCIX, p. 455. With regard to the school fees charged where parents were supposed to be able to afford them, the Bill confirmed the usage then established which was: one third from the parents, one third from public taxes and one third out of local funds.

been departed from; on the contrary, subsequent Bills have merely been complementary to them. As might have been expected, the differentiation between those who could and those who could not afford to pay their children's fees in the working classes, soon became a dead letter, and the measure of 1870 ultimately amounted, in practice, to compulsory free elementary education for the working classes. Indeed, by the year 1882, free compulsory elementary education may be said to have become operative throughout the whole country. What is particularly interesting, however, from our point of view, is that Tories and Conservatives supported Mr. Forster quite as enthusiastically as moderate Liberals, and the heat of the debates was almost entirely confined to the religious aspects of the measure.

Thus, Lord Sandon's Bill of 1876, which marks the contribution of the Conservative Party to the national system of education, far from reversing the policy of 1870, confirmed and extended it, and the only modification it embodied was to take a further step towards universal direct compulsion. It is true that it repealed the provision of the Act of 1870, which enabled School Boards to pay the fees of parents who, though not paupers, were unable to pay their children's fees; but it simply enacted in its place the more extensive provision that parents so situated might apply to the Guardians of the Poor and receive the fees from them, without being considered to be in receipt of outdoor relief.

The principle of free education having once more been conceded by Liberal and Conservative legislators, it was only to be expected that subsequent legislation would merely extend its application, and thus we are not surprised to find that in the later Liberal Bill of 1906, local authorities were enabled to aid voluntary

bodies in providing meals for children. In 1907-1908, 40, and in 1908-1909, 75 authorities in England and Wales were allowed by the Board to spend moneys from the rates to supply food under this Act, and in recent years the expenditure on this public service has leapt up to an enormous figure.¹

Turning now to the question of immigration, and the laws against aliens, it is obvious that under this head we are concerned with subjects of very grave importance to the Conservative politician. For, if the preservation of the identity of the nation throughout change, be the object of Conservative politics, the facilities afforded to foreign settlers in this country should be the object of very jealous and serious attention.

The mixing of blood has so often in the past proved the principal cause of a nation's decay, that, in the light of history, we now see a very rational justification for the haughty attitude of aloofness which ancient peoples, like the Jews, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans, cultivated towards the 'barbarian', and the foreigner. That they adopted this position at their zenith, and that their fall followed the relaxation of their laws against the emancipation of, and marriage with, the foreigner, can at least be learned from the history of both Greece and Rome, and in considering the question of the alien and immigration in regard to home politics, it is as well to bear in mind all that has been said and written, particularly by men like the Comte de Gobineau,

¹ In London schools alone the average weekly number of meals provided may be seen from the following table:

			<i>Dinners</i>	<i>Breakfasts</i>	<i>Milk</i>
1917-1918	..	..	32,447	2,519	19,535
1918-1919	..	..	22,472	1,369	21,698
1919-1920	..	..	21,160	1,074	26,669
1920-1921	..	..	47,553	3,349	32,499

Otto Sieck, and Reibmayr, on the question of mixed breeding, and the loss of character that it involves.

Now the tradition in England has always been sound in this respect. There has never been much love of the foreigner in this country, and the earliest laws exemplify this wise Conservative bias.

Taking the case of the Jews first, it is obvious that anti-Semitism in the sense of imputing to the Jews an ethnic proclivity to wickedness, or to immorality, or to meanness, or to any other 'sinful' characteristic, is neither intelligent nor quite respectable. And the anti-Semitism, which, as many, including Nietzsche, have pointed out, is the outcome of jealousy of the Jews' frequent material success, is thoroughly disreputable. On the other hand, however, unless one is a believer in the fantastic and wholly unrealisable principle that all men are equal, the two policies which consist (*a*) in preserving the identity of the nation, and (*b*) in confusing the nation's ethnic elements and character, must always appear sharply antagonistic. It is fatuous and romantic to hope that the culture created by a definite national character can remain the same, and, moreover, can continue suitable to that national character, if it is influenced by ethnic components foreign to, or out of keeping with, itself. And although we may have the deepest respect for the Jews, for their intelligence, their thrift, and their endurance, we may nevertheless conceive it as impossible to preserve the identity of our nation and its culture, if we allow them, powerful as they are, to influence or modify our institutions and (through miscegenation) our blood, to suit their peculiar cultural tendencies which are so different from our own. True Conservatives, therefore, should show themselves firmly hostile to (*a*) the principle of Jewish emancipation, which enables the Jew ulti-

mately to influence our national politics and our culture; and (*b*) to any encouragement of a mingling of the two peoples, Jew and English, through marriage. And, I repeat, this hostility should be shown not owing to any narrow dislike of the Jews as such, but owing to the impossibility of securing the preservation of the nation's identity (which includes its character, culture and institutions) except by preserving its ethnic type.

Now, in its attitude to the Jew, both as a foreigner and as a man of power, mediæval England was truly and wisely Conservative. The Jews were never encouraged to settle, the treatment shown them was never entirely friendly, whether among the people or at the hands of the government, and in 1290, as we know, they were altogether expelled. No doubt one or two may have crept back after the banishment, but the number could not have been great, and it was not until three hundred and sixty-five years later, that they were allowed to return—that is to say, when suddenly the Conservative and Tory spirit of the nation had just received its second great blow.

All kinds of reasons have been advanced for the sudden favour shown to the Jews under the Commonwealth; but surely the obvious reason is the fantastic and unrealistic ideology of the Puritan-Whig-Trade mentality, which became paramount on the death of Charles I. It has been said that the effects of Menasseh Ben Israel, and his humble address to Cromwell and his government in 1653, softened the Protector's heart. It has been said that many republicans, Henry Marten among them,¹ had mooted the question some time before, and it has even been hinted that, owing

¹ Roger Williams and Hugh Peters, both Independents, were in favour of re-admitting the Jews, and a petition to that end drawn up by two Baptists in Amsterdam was presented to the army in 1649.

to the Reformers' and Puritans' return to the Bible as a ruling authority, Old Testament lore had become much more widely known, and had led to a more sympathetic attitude towards the Jews. All these influences may have helped.¹ But my point is that they could have done nothing against a strong Conservative attitude based upon the ethnic considerations outlined above. And it was because this attitude was for the moment unrepresented in the governing body, that in 1656 Cromwell allowed the Jews to return, and, what is more, presented Menasseh Ben Israel with a pension.² The fact that Charles II extended Cromwell's tolerance to the Jews, and that in the reign of James II the remission of the alien duty in the case of the Jews marked a further step towards their complete emancipation, only shows how deficient in true Tory principle the governments of these two Kings were. This, however, I have already pointed out in regard to other matters.

Under the Whigs in 1723 a special Act was passed permitting Jews to hold land; in 1740, according to Act 13, George II, Cap. 7, Jews who had resided in the British colonies for over seven years were permitted to become naturalised; and in 1753, a further attempt was made to incorporate the Jews in the body of the nation, by means of a Naturalisation Act; but it was immediately repealed, and it was not until 1830-1834 that efforts were made to pass a Jewish Emancipation Bill through Parliament. The

¹ It has also been said that the Maranos, or secret Jews, settled in London in the middle of the seventeenth century, were able, owing to the ramifications of their trade interests abroad, to give Cromwell and his Secretary, Thurloe, important information about Charles Stuart and his plans. Outwardly they posed as Spaniards and Catholics, but they became known to the government as Jews by faith and were tolerated because of their usefulness.

² This was £100 per annum, payable quarterly.

whole of the Tory Party was opposed to it, however, and it had to be dropped. Under the Whigs again, in 1835, by the Sheriff's Declaration Bill, Jews were allowed to hold the ancient and important office of Sheriff; and in 1845, when Tory resistance to Jewish Emancipation was beginning to weaken, a Bill was passed by Sir Robert Peel's second administration which allowed Jews admission to municipal office. Finally, in 1846, the Religious Opinions Relief Bill left only the doors of Parliament closed to the Jews; and it was again under a Whig government in 1848, that a Bill to admit Jews to Parliament was passed through the House of Commons. Three times, in 1848, 1850, and 1853, the Lords, who were then preponderatingly Tory, rejected the Bill; and although in 1858 it was agreed between the two Houses that Jews might be admitted by special resolution, it was not until Lord Palmerston's second administration in 1860 that the Liberals freed the Jews from all disability.

Thus, in regard to Jewish Emancipation, the responsibility for the whole of the success of the movement may be said to rest chiefly with the Puritan-Whig-Liberal line of politicians.

Turning now to the cognate question of aliens and immigration, much the same remarks apply as those already made in reference to the Jews. The question is not, which policy is kindest, or most generous, or most liberal in the non-political sense, but what object is envisaged by sound politics. Again, if it is the preservation of the nation's identity, we are obviously on a different plane from that of the man who wishes to be hospitable and open-hearted at all costs.

Under the Norman and Plantagenet Kings an alien could not, by the common law, hold landed

property, and could not even take the lease of a house. According to Sir Alexander Cockburn, Lord Chief Justice of England, 'the jealousy of foreigners appears to have dated from the earliest times'¹; and, by the ancient Kings, amongst whom King Alfred was one, it was forbidden by any alien merchant to make his haunt in England, except at the four fairs, or to sojourn in the land above forty days. Thus, till upwards of two hundred years after the Conquest, strangers were not allowed to reside here, even for trade, beyond a limited time, except by special warrant; and until the end of the thirteenth century foreign merchants in England were bound to live in lodgings, and to employ their landlords as their brokers to sell their goods for them.

Magna Carta, it is true, made a provision for the protection of foreign merchants, and Edward I permitted them to hire houses of their own and to dispose of their goods themselves. But the feeling of the people in regard to these reforms was shown by the fact that the citizens of London petitioned the King against them, although without success. Edward III continued the liberal policy of his grandfather; but even in his second statute (27, Edward III, st. 2, c. 17), dealing with the question of aliens, it is enacted that 'merchants of enemies countries shall sell their goods in convenient time and depart'.² Richard II upheld his predecessors' policy; but from his reign onwards, until comparatively recent times, a series of measures restricted the freedom of foreign merchants to trade within the realm.

Thus by Act 32nd, Henry VIII, c. 16, para. 83, all leases, whether of a dwelling house or shop, within the realm or any of the King's dominions, held by

¹ *Nationality* (London, 1869), p. 139.

² Cockburn (*op. cit.* p. 147).

any stranger, artificer, or handicraftsman, born out of the King's obeisance, and not being a denizen, were null and void, and the person taking such a lease was punished.

Now it is an extraordinary thing, which speaks highly for the conservative spirit of England, that no amendment of this law took place until the Act 7 and 8, Victoria, c. 66, in the year 1844, when aliens were allowed to take a lease of real property for the purpose of residence or business for twenty-one years, though they were still forbidden to hold real estate. If they purchased landed estate which was freehold the Sovereign was entitled to it. It is interesting to note that the change effected in 1844 took place under Sir Robert Peel's second administration.

With regard to the status of aliens, this matter lay very largely in the hands of the Sovereign and his advisers. There appear to have been two ways of securing the rights of a subject—denization and naturalisation by Act of Parliament. The former was affected by letters patent from the Sovereign, and seems to have depended upon the recognition of the applicant's usefulness either to the government or to the country¹; and the latter, which was a very expensive process, depended, of course, on the will of the legislature. Without either one of these two methods of acquiring the status of a British subject, the alien remained and was treated as a foreigner.

The arrival of William III with his Dutch following, evidently stiffened the opposition to peaceful penetration, for according to Acts 12 and 13, William III,

¹ Thus, according to 15 Charles II, c. 15, 'all foreigners who shall really and *bonafide* set up to use certain trades and manufactures (linen spinning, net weaving, tapestry making) by the space of 3 years in England and Wales or Berwick-on-Tweed, shall, on taking the usual oaths, enjoy all privileges whatsoever, as the natural born subjects of the kingdom.'

cl. 2, naturalised or denizenized subjects were excluded from the Privy Council, Houses of Parliament, or any office or place of trust, either civil or military, or any grant of lands. On the accession of the House of Hanover, the same restrictions were imposed, and it was not until the Act of the 7 and 8, Victoria, c. 66 (1844), that a third means of naturalisation improved the facilities for aliens. According to this Act, which was framed 'to amend the Laws relating to Aliens', an Alien by presenting a memorial to Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, setting forth the grounds on which he desired to be naturalised, could, if he satisfied the authorities, obtain a certificate granting him the rights and privileges of a British subject, except those of becoming a member of the Privy Council or of either Houses of Parliament.

It is true that meanwhile, chiefly owing to the exigencies of war and of a big navy, various enactments had been passed automatically to naturalise foreigners in British warships; for instance, Act 13, George II, c. 3, and Act 22, George II, c. 45. But while these measures were undoubtedly of Whig origin—for George II had no say—and were of course pernicious from the standpoint of the national physique, they were, we must suppose, excusable on the score of temporary expediency.

It was not until the Naturalisation Act of 1870, under Gladstone's first administration, that the civil disabilities of aliens were completely abolished (except that of holding shares in British ships) and that naturalisation was made easy and inexpensive. By the payment of a small fee and the ceremony of taking the Oath of Allegiance all people of foreign birth who had resided not less than five years in the country, or had been in the service of the Crown for not less than five years, and who intended to reside in the

United Kingdom or serve under the Crown, could now procure their naturalisation as British subjects, and subsequent acts have been merely complementary to this measure.

To those aliens, however, who were content with this country as a refuge and an asylum, and who did not trouble much about their political or civil status, while they remained poor and obscure, and who came over here in their hundreds of thousands during the nineteenth century, no obstacle was presented; and it is to the eternal shame, both of the Conservative and Liberal administrations—but chiefly to the former—that until Mr. Balfour's Alien's Act of 1905, nothing was done to protect the British masses either from the fierce competition or from the diseases which these immigrants introduced. This is to say nothing of the foreign blood, which their free commerce with the native population necessarily brought into the country, to undermine, or at least to modify its character and its physique; and those who at present feel inclined to marvel at the change that has come over the self-reliant and independent nature of the Englishman, should bear this in mind. It is not every foreigner who is affected by difficulties in the way of naturalisation. Only the richest, for instance, could desire freehold property, or a place in Parliament and the House of Lords. To the great mass of aliens, therefore, none of the disabilities that I have enumerated, appeared in the least onerous, and it is this class who were, therefore, least handicapped by the laws against aliens, and who nevertheless exercised the most oppressive and corrupting influence upon the poorer elements in the native population.

With regard to factory legislation, it is notorious that, despite the enormous changes which had taken place in the social condition of the people, since the

accession of George III (see pp. 88-90), and which cried out loudly for the wise interference of the legislature, no Tory administration took any effective steps to mitigate the evils created by the new conditions. It is true that under Addington, in 1802, a measure was passed,¹ known as the Health and Morals of Apprentices' Act, which constituted a first step towards the protection of the workers; but it was aimed only at the evils of the apprentice system, its provisions were very much limited, and except in certain small areas, it was not enforced by the justices. It provided for religious teaching, adequate sleeping accommodation and clothing, and the lime-washing and ventilation of all cotton and woollen factories employing more than twenty persons. Visitors were to be appointed by country justices to repress abuses and to recommend the adoption of such sanitary regulations as they might think proper. But seeing that it left numerous trades and workshops out of account, and was not energetically enforced, it hardly affected the situation.

The Act of 1819, passed under Lord Liverpool's administration, went a little further,² and dealt with the employment of children in cotton factories; but, seeing that its principal provisions were to prohibit the labour of children under 9!! and to limit the working day to 12 hours in the 24!! without specifying the precise hour of beginning or closing, and in view of the fact that no more stringent measures for enforcing the law were made than those in the Act of 1802, the abuses it left untouched may easily be imagined.

¹ This was the work of the first Sir Robert Peel, who was himself a manufacturer.

² This was also due to the energy of the first Sir Robert Peel, who had noticed the abuses that were still rife in spite of the Act of 1802.

The first Factory Act was passed under a Liberal administration; but in fairness to the Tories, it must be admitted that it was chiefly the work of two men, Michael Thomas Sadler, a Tory, and the aristocrat, Lord Ashley; and the whole of the Whig-Capitalist-Factory section of the nation, including men like John Bright, Sir James Graham, Lord Brougham,¹ Mr. Gladstone and Richard Cobden, were fiercely opposed to it. It was with the utmost difficulty that it was ultimately carried, and in the weakness of many of its provisions it did not satisfy its promoters. It left all the horrors which were ultimately to be revealed by the Royal Commission on the Labour of Young Persons in Mines and Manufactures (1841) untouched; but in view of what was taking place all over the country, it was something to the good, that it limited the hours of labour for children under 13 years of age to 8 hours a day, and for children between 13 and 18 to 12 hours a day!! It also prohibited work between 8.30 p.m. and 5.30 a.m., and made the first provision for inspectors to enforce the law.

When it is remembered that the Liberal gentlemen I have mentioned had the cruelty to resist a measure so inadequate as this for mitigating the hardships of children in industry in the early part of the century, we may imagine the difficulties which confronted such pioneers as Sadler and Lord Ashley.² Besides, it soon became obvious that the provisions of the law were being evaded by fraud. Children were represented as being much older than they really were, and the abuses that prevailed induced Lord Ashley in

¹ This politician, be it noticed, had played a most active part in the abolition of negro slavery.

² A good account of Lord Ashley's early struggles for the women and children in industry is to be found in Edwin Hodder's *The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., as Social Reformer* (London, 1897).

1838 to bring in a Bill for the Better Regulation of Factories. But twice the Bill was defeated, owing to the opposition of men like Lord John Russell and the followers of the Manchester School, who argued about the evils of interfering with free contract and the danger of losing our trade if the hours of labour were restricted.

At last, under Viscount Melbourne's second administration (Liberal), The Royal Commission on the Labour of Young Persons in Mines and Manufactures was appointed, and the Commissioners revealed such terrible facts about the cruelty and demoralisation connected with the employment of women and children in coal mines, that immediate legislative interference seemed imperative. People could not believe that such practices could exist in a civilised country. To leave aside the immorality that was practised, and of which both the children and women were the victims, it was discovered that children of six were working in dark and unwholesome excavations, while women were at work on tasks for which their strength was inadequate, and by which their modesty was undermined. For instance, it was not uncommon to find a young girl almost naked crawling on all fours all day and drawing behind her, hooked to a chain that passed between her legs and was fastened round her neck, a small truck of coal. These girls worked with adult colliers who wore no clothes at all!!

Lord Ashley took the subject up, and in the session of 1842 brought in a Bill founded on the reports of the Commission. This first Mines' Act, which 'in spite of the coldness of the government, the peers, and even the Church',¹ became law in a single session

¹ See Edwin Hodder. *Op. cit.* p. 93. In spite of the universal horror created by the details of the Report, the opposition to the

on the 10th of August, 1842, excluded women and girls from underground working, limited the employment of boys, and excluded from underground working those under ten years of age!

It was, however, not until 1850 that fatal accidents were systematically recorded, and not until 1855 that other safeguards for health, life and limb in mines were satisfactorily provided for.

Under the Liberal administration of Lord John Russell, in 1847, an additional Factory Act restricted hours of labour for women and young persons to ten a day, and fixed the daily limits between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Further miserable facts revealed by the Report of the third Children's Employment Commission in 1862 led to another Act in 1864, which brought in a large number of industries which had been left out by previous measures, and both the Commission and the Act were the work of Liberal administrations.

Various other measures followed, in 1874, 1878, 1891, 1895, and 1901, all tending to improve the condition of the worker, and to protect his life and limb. But the whole of this legislation was too late in coming; the opposition with which it met in the early days was disgraceful, and the fact that the question was neglected for so long and that, when it was investigated, private individuals were responsible for the agitations that first called the attention of the country to the evils that existed, constitutes an indelible blot on the record of the one party whose obvious duty and policy it was to care for the hearts, the health, and the character of the people. The one

Mines' Act in the Lords was apparently very severe. The extraordinary feature of these reforms during the first half of the nineteenth century is the fact that none of them appear to have been initiated by the Church.

redeeming feature in this ugly picture is the presence of two Tories like Michael Thomas Sadler and Lord Ashley among the pioneer agitators for factory reform.

Chapter IV

A CRITICISM OF THE CONSERVATIVE IN PRACTICE

WE are now in a position to discuss the political aspects of the problem of Health, Food, Education, the Jews, Immigration and Factory Legislation in this country, and to observe the light which their treatment in the past throws upon the Tory Party.

The problems chosen seemed peculiarly suitable for investigation owing to the fact that, although they occupy but a small place in the political history of England, they are all closely connected with the vital and greater problem of preserving the identity of the nation, and are therefore of the deepest concern to Tory and Conservative politicians.

Much has been said in the past, and still continues to be said, about the stupidity of the Conservative Party, their lack of ideas, and their lack of policy. A good deal of this adverse criticism is undoubtedly deserved; but let it not be imagined that because other parties have made a bigger display, they are therefore more intellectual than the Conservative Party. This conclusion is, as a rule, much too readily drawn before the ground has been properly explored. It is generally supposed that Liberalism and Jacobinism (Socialism, Communism) possess a greater weight of brains because their shop window is always more attractively dressed than that of the Conservative. But all ideas are not necessarily valuable. To be full of ideas is not necessarily to be in a position to offer even one practical solution of any modern problem.

And since, as has already been pointed out, the ideas of Liberalism and Jacobinism are, by the nature of their tradition, fantastic ideas, it does not follow, because the Conservatives are poor in ideas that they are any less intelligent than their opponents.

It is because the Conservative Party have as a rule no *practical*, no *realistic*, ideas, that they may fairly be regarded as stupid. But in this they are no worse than any other party. In fact they are, on the whole, a good deal better. It may be true that the leading coterie of Conservatism, together with the Aristocracy, have recently staked too much upon the undeniable charm of their manners, and the fact that this alone has not been found enough to maintain the nation in a state of contented tutelage, is not surprising. But let us not exaggerate the stupidity of one party to the advantage of any other. In the lack of realistic ideas Conservatives are no better and no worse than any of their opponents.

A proof of how completely Conservatism has become severed from the realistic principles on which it is based and from which it derives, may be gathered from the fact that there is no longer any necessary association between Conservatism and, for instance, the protection of the masses. When, as a Conservative, one writes or speaks in favour of the poor, or the oppressed, or the exploited proletariat, and recommends an attitude of solicitude and sympathy towards them one is instantly suspected of Socialistic tendencies. A certain Whig reviewer, in discussing my book, *The False Assumptions of Democracy*, which is really Conservative in spirit, accused me of recommending 'highly Socialistic' measures, because, if you please, I declared it to be the duty of the Conservatives to give serious thought to such matters as the feeding of infants, pure bread and pure drink.

Any political gesture, except that of preserving privilege, seems both to the popular and to the learned mind incompatible with Tory or Conservative principles, and it is very much to be feared that Conservatives themselves have allowed their party to assume the rôle allotted to it by ignorant prejudice. Even after making every possible allowance for the fact that the Whigs and Socialists, by having the whole field of romance and extravagance at their disposal, are naturally able to appear more fertile in ideas, it must still be acknowledged that Conservatives have perhaps concerned themselves too little with ideas of any sort whatsoever, and have taken a pride in distrusting intellectualism as such. This is not, however, as crassly stupid as at first sight it may appear; for there is much more involved in the successful direction of a great country's domestic and foreign policy than intellectual power. As I have already shown in great detail elsewhere, taste and character are just as important in the ruler as intellect and a sense of history. Nevertheless, when a party abandons intellectuality, and frequently has neither taste nor character to fall back upon, then its claims upon our respect are certainly poor, and we may rightly feel that even a little intellect would be better than nothing at all.

The Tory and Conservative, however, have certainly laboured under the great disadvantage of having only a very sparse literature. Even historical treatises, ever since the Grand Rebellion, have been chiefly the work of Whigs, and when I first set to work upon my *Defence of Aristocracy*, I was struck by the great disproportion between the literature on Democracy and Liberalism and that on Aristocracy and Conservatism. Treatises on the principles of the Tory and Conservative faith hardly exist, and the student of these principles has to fall back upon the

writings of Bolingbroke, Burke and Disraeli, with possibly Pitt's speeches thrown in. Now none of these writers, except possibly Bolingbroke and Disraeli, ever set out to write a methodical treatise on Conservative politics, and the consequence is that, even with their works at his fingers' ends, the student is often in possession of mere epigrams and tags, rather than systematic doctrine. And the same holds good of modern writers. The majority of able penmen are either Liberal or Socialist. This is, of course, due to the fact that Liberalism and Socialism, being fantastic and romantic, offer more scope to the imaginative faculty. But it is disturbing notwithstanding; for to the superficial it appears to lend to these political creeds the weight of the best intellectual convictions. And the same holds good of philosophy. From Locke to Herbert Spencer, there has been no true follower of Aristotle in the domain of realism and sound human psychology. Everywhere we can discern that strain of loose thinking¹ which inclines so readily to the fantastic notions of equality, the radical goodness of human nature, liberty, and the whole of the nonsensical rigmarole of romanticism.

Even among the writers of purely political philosophy, such as Burke and Disraeli, there is a good deal of mysticism which is confusing.² I will give only one example from each writer. To speak as Burke does of 'Each contract of each particular

¹ In Spencer the loose thinking is frequently fundamental. Compare, for instance, his doctrine regarding parasites, with his doctrine dealing with the necessity inherent in the blind process of evolution of favouring 'changes of nature which increase life and augment happiness'.

² G. P. Gooch, M.A., in the chapter on Europe and the French Revolution (*Cambridge Modern History*. Vol. VIII, p. 757), recognises the mysticism of Burke. But, so far, I have found no confirmation of my own view regarding Disraeli's mysticism.

state "in society" as being but a clause in the great primæval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and the invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures each in their appointed place',¹ is far from helpful. It is actually confusing; for, apart from the fact that the meaning of many of these words is by no means clear, society is a much more practical and realistic affair, and depends upon the common nature and common needs of a particular group of men.

It is also mystical in Disraeli to exalt 'race' as he does, as a kind of metaphysical force operating as a panacea for all ills. Such phraseology savours of religious fanaticism rather than of political realism. The word 'race', in relation to the national politics of Europe, can have only one use, that is to describe the end-result of the segregation of a particular body of people, who, although originally composed of different ethnic components, have become largely homogeneous in character through the observance of the same culture, values and ideals over a long period of time. A mixed people, who enjoy an integrated culture for many generations may thus acquire characteristics, more or less uniform, which constitute them a separate ethnic division of mankind, and any disturbance of their culture, or any introduction on a large scale of foreign elements may so destroy their homogeneity as to invalidate their claim to national individuality. But to speak of race without carefully defining the term as Disraeli does,² and then to say that 'all is race', leads one rather to suspect that he

¹ *Reflections*.

² It is true that in *Endymion* he tells us that 'there is only one thing which makes a race, and that is blood', but this is not very helpful.

is trying to exalt the quality of ethnic separateness as such, above everything else; and thus, despite his professed non-partisan views, to hold a brief for the Jew, the Chinaman, or the Arab—but probably for the Jew in particular—as against people of confused or mixed origin. But, as we have already pointed out, from the national standpoint this may be a very dangerous doctrine. If it is true that every race must ultimately tend to evolve a culture of its own, then why should 'all' be 'race'. 'All' in English politics certainly may be 'race', in the sense of the segregated stock known as the English people. But if we use the term indiscriminately, then, as far as English politics are concerned 'all' certainly is not 'race', and Disraeli himself would have had no status in English political life. It may be, and I believe is, true, that the neglect of 'race' in the sense of a particular segregated national stock, may have done much injury not only to the English constitution, but also to the English people; but the strict application of this view would have made Disraeli's own accession to power impossible, and would moreover have excluded his fellow Jews from all influence in the legislature of this country.

Thus Tories and Conservatives may be said to have laboured under two radical disadvantages, which it would have needed a continuous sequence of enlightened thinkers and statesmen to have overcome. On the one hand they have been restricted to realism for a sound ideology, and have thus had the whole field of romantic and fantastic imagery excluded from their programme (and the ignorant populace is strongly moved by romantic and fantastic imagery); and, on the other, they have suffered from an extreme dearth of doctrinal literature.

It is true that they have too often failed to master

either their opponents' voluminous philosophy, or the meagre philosophy of their own side; that, in short, they have shunned the sphere of ideas. But again this much may be urged in their defence—that, if Conservatism may (and it is here submitted that it may) be regarded as an attitude of mind independent of locality and epoch, then the preponderating influence of a romantic and fantastic ideology in Europe, ever since the downfall of the realistic Pagan world, has made the task of conservative minds in modern Europe an extremely difficult and thankless one. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that as the majority of political ideas have emanated from the romantic stock, it is not unnatural that ideas as such should have lost caste and prestige. A population is judged by its preponderating elements. And thus the attitude of the true Tory and Conservative towards ideas in general may quite well be the outcome of these gentlemen's recognition of the disreputability of the preponderating elements in the ideology of politics. This would at least be comprehensible. It is, however, inexcusable. For, unfortunately, there is but one way of fighting false ideas, and that is by means of sound ideas. And in holding itself proudly aloof from the industry of coining, because the world is so full of counterfeit coiners, the Conservative Party, with the aristocrats who in recent years have constituted its principal legislative backing, have at last placed themselves in a wholly defenceless position. They have no arsenal, and seem to be utterly disinclined to build one up.

Yet the recent political history of Europe affords abundant proof of how easily even the mere hawkers of ideas, whatever the quality of their wares may be, can succeed in political struggles. Both in Russia and Italy, it has been the journalists not the statesmen, the

pamphleteers not the politicians, who have risen to power. Lenin and Trotsky were both journalists, Mussolini was a journalist. In France, too, we find Clemenceau was a journalist, as were also Rochefort and Poincaré; while, in England, not only has the guidance of politicians been in the hands of pamphleteers ever since Swift and Defoe, but the very success of the extreme Liberal Left and Labour Parties in recent years must also be ascribed very largely to the spade work of that body of Pamphleteers and journalists known as the Fabian Society.

We may not look gladly upon the journalist who has worked himself into political power; for apart from the fact that we cannot expect sound political thought from a man trained in appealing to the popular taste, we should remember that journalism also spells opportunism, and, as a rule, irresponsibility. Nevertheless, the careers of Lenin, Trotsky, and Mussolini, show what an immense advantage over the modern professional politician that man enjoys who has only a remote and mercenary relationship to ideas, sound or unsound, and the example afforded by these successful journalist statesmen ought to warn the politician of the future against continuing any further along the lines of that unphilosophic and haphazard political activity in which all ideas are regarded as suspect, and so-called 'men of action' (in plain English, men of a mechanical turn of mind) are preferred before men of thought and philosophic training.

Thus, although the charge of stupidity which is so often and so frivolously levelled against the Conservative and Aristocratic party of the nineteenth century, contains, as we have seen a misunderstanding—for the qualifications required by a sound Conservative statesman are by no means confined to intellectual

power—it represents a certain portion of the truth. And, when it is said that Conservatives have suffered for many generations, either from ignorance or the total lack of doctrinal guidance, we have a good deal of historical evidence to substantiate our claim. Indeed, even if we confine ourselves to the data regarding Health, Food, Education, the Jews, Immigration and Factory Legislation, outlined in the last chapter, we shall find ample demonstration of its validity. It may, therefore, not be unprofitable to examine briefly the facts collected in that chapter.

Dealing with the question of Health first, it appears fairly obvious from the facts known about the Middle Ages, and from our knowledge of the minute care of the health and welfare of the community taken by the governing classes of that period, that mediæval society would have been much better able to handle the problems created by the Industrial Revolution than were the statesmen of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For, as far as England is concerned, the Reformation and the Grand Rebellion had two significant consequences not usually referred to in history. The first of these was the destruction of Catholic tradition in the matter of diet and hygiene, and the second was the severance of politics from economics.¹ The statesmen of the Middle Ages, and above all the King at their head, were perfectly well aware that the health and happiness of the individual subject were questions which it was incumbent upon the State to study and understand. By the time that Charles I was beheaded, however, this doctrine had become almost obsolete. Individual happiness and health, were regarded as beyond the sphere of government, and it was left to Socialism in the nineteenth

¹ Mr. Maurice Woods (*op. cit.* p. 408) comes to almost the same conclusion.

century to revive the mediæval and wholly Conservative view that the State had a direct interest—nay an urgent duty, in caring for the health and happiness of the people.

Against those who still think this view purely Socialistic, it is idle to argue that you cannot preserve a nation's identity throughout change without caring for its health and its happiness, and therefore that sound Conservative politics must be concerned with the national health.¹ The fact that Tories and Conservatives long neglected this part of their political doctrine, and that by so doing they created the breach which Socialism fills, is one too historical to influence the cogitations of the average modern journalist or politician. Hence the long dissociation in both the ignorant and the sophisticated mind, of Conservative politics from any concern about national health and welfare. And if we examine the data given on this point in the last chapter we shall find that, in spite of the enormous and frequently devastating changes that came over the lives of the common people from 1760 to 1830, nothing was done by any Tory government to establish a board or department which would take upon itself the responsibility for the Public Health, until through the agitation of purely private individuals, measures were taken in 1844–1845 to organise the water supply and sewage of the country, and again in 1866 to establish a more

¹ Disraeli was particularly emphatic on this point in his speech at Manchester on April 3rd, 1872. He claimed that 'pure air, pure water, the inspection of unhealthy habitations, the adulteration of food, etc.', were subjects with which Conservative politics ought to concern themselves, and it is interesting as a reflection upon the attitude of his Liberal opponents regarding these matters, to note that they contemptuously stigmatised his programme as a 'policy of sewage'. (See *Selected Speeches of the Earl of Beaconsfield*. Longmans Green & Co., 1882. Vol. II, pp. 511 and 532–533).

efficient control over nuisances of all kinds and to oblige local authorities to institute such services as the public health required. Other Acts followed which extended the principles laid down in these first two measures. But it is only just to say that, in this vital department of government, so essential to a sound Conservative administration, England might quite well have been without any Tory or Conservative administration for close on one hundred years.

It may, however, be questioned whether even the Act of 1866, despite the wisdom of some of its provisions, did not include a principle which was more Whig than Tory in its conception, and for this reason: if sound Conservatism must include some earnest endeavour to preserve the national health, it is none the less committed to the policy of also preserving the national character. But the radical feature of the Anglo-Saxon character, and one of its most valuable elements, had, as has already been shown, always consisted in its particularism, that is to say its independence and self-reliance. To introduce, therefore, the principle of gratuitous medical service, even for an operation which, at the time, was believed to be as important as vaccination, was a dangerous innovation. It was anti-Tory and anti-Conservative. To defray the cost of a slight service of this kind in order to encourage its use, was to begin that indirect subsidisation of industry out of the pockets of the whole community, which was gradually to undermine the character of the working population, and in this sense it ought to have been strongly deprecated by the true Conservatives of the day. It amounted to playing into the hands of the payers of wages without reckoning with the harm done to the wage-earners who availed themselves of the gratuity. Far better would it have been to impose a certain degree of compulsion (with

the necessary reservations for objectors), to demand a small fee for the service, and where poverty forbade the use of the service, to start then and there an enquiry into the prevailing system of wages with the view of discovering why workers were insufficiently remunerated to be able independently to provide for their own medical needs. This would have been the truly Conservative policy. Because, while it would have tended to make industries and their workers self-supporting, it would have arrested a vicious principle at its inception, and at the same time preserved character. The fact that the problem of adequate employment and remuneration has still to be faced, and that meanwhile the self-reliance and self-respect of the working community have been largely undermined by the extension of the gratuity principle involved in this act, shows that it was vicious in its effect; and, seeing that it undertook to relieve the industrialists of the onus of raising wages, and to spend part of the money due to the workers before it actually reached their pockets, it was also Whig in conception. Naturally the Whig-Liberal magnates of Industry and Commerce were delighted, but the vital problem was thus shelved only to fall with greater weight upon the shoulders of *our* generation.

Throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century this vicious principle was extended more and more, until with Lloyd George's Insurance Act of 1912, the method of spending a portion of the poor man's wages for him, before it reached his pocket, was established upon such a prodigious scale, as to make a certain shrewd writer on the Conservative side ask whether Government was not actually evading the Truck Act. Whatever may be said against the working of the Insurance Act—and as far as I have been able to discover there appears to be a good deal to be said

against it¹—it was at least a measure consistent with the Puritan-Whig-Liberal tradition of favouring industry and caring not a jot about the character of the people. But the vicious principle which it merely extended was one already endorsed by Tories and Conservatives alike; and for this fact alone, apart from the hundred years neglect of the public health, of which enough has already been said, the Tory and Conservative Party cannot be too severely blamed. It reveals them as inadequately equipped in the knowledge of their own principles and incapable of facing new problems with a steady regard for the truly Conservative solution of their difficulties. It is an example of reform undertaken in a Whig and not a Tory spirit, and it shows that, while changes are necessary in a nation, it by no means follows that the identity of that nation may not be preserved if the changes are directed by a wise Conservative policy.

More or less the same remarks apply to the Tory attitude to Food. It was not incumbent upon the fantastic and romantic Liberals, with their Puritan disregard for the bodies of the people, to concern themselves about the nation's food. But it was decidedly the duty of all Tory governments, whose realism should have awakened them to the idleness of trying to preserve the identity of the nation without securing the latter's healthy nourishment. More-

¹ For an interesting adverse criticism of it see the wholly impartial work of the American writer, Gerald Morgan (*op. cit.* pp. 61, 62). Its chief absurdity was that it was copied from Bismarck's 1883 legislation. How can legislation be copied in this way? Has the German the same problem of character to deal with as the English? The fact that Lloyd George imagined that he could thus borrow political ideas wholesale from another nation possessed of a different character-complex from the British, is only an additional proof, if such were needed, of the fantastic and romantic nature of the Liberal mind.

over, it was the poor who were the worst sufferers from the abuses that prevailed; and the poor, that is to say, the people, who ought always to have been the special object of the solicitude of the Conservative Party, were a large body in the nation, and were the principle victims of the changes that modern urban and industrial conditions had introduced.

When the measure which resulted from the Commission, appointed in 1855, to enquire into the adulteration of food and drink, reached the Committee stage in the Commons, Mr. Wise, on February 29th, 1860, said: 'Adulteration was in the highest degree an injustice and hardship to the poor. . . . The wealthiest classes were able to protect themselves, the poor could not do so.'¹ He then proceeded to ennumerate some of the findings of the Commission, and, among other facts, revealed that bread was habitually adulterated with potatoes, plaster of Paris, alum and sulphate of copper; gin with grains of Paradise,² sulphuric acid and cayenne; marmalade with apples and turnips; porter and stout, though sent pure from the brewers, with water, sugar, treacle, salt, alum, *coccus Indicus*,³ grains of Paradise, *nux vomica* and sulphuric acid⁴; vinegar, with water, sugar and sulphuric acid; and tea with silk-worm dung, which gave it a deep colouring.⁵ He also stated that the Commission had arrived at the conclusion that: 'the intoxication, so deplorably prevalent, is in many cases less due to the natural properties of the drinks themselves, than to the admixture of

¹ Hansard. Vol. CLVI, p. 2026.

² An aromatic and pungent seed imported from Guinea.

³ A drug consisting of the dried fruit of *anamirta cocculus*, having narcotic and poisonous properties—yielding *pierotoxin*.

⁴ This abuse is still to a large extent carried on by retailing publicans all over the country, with beer that is said to be 'on draught'.

⁵ Hansard. Vol. CLVI, pp. 2026–2027.

narcotics and other noxious substances intended to supply the properties lost by dilution.’¹

The Adulteration of Food and Drinks’ Bill did indeed become law in 1860, but, as has already been shown, it did little good, and in many cases met with much opposition before it was passed. One member of the House, Mr. Hardy, even went so far as to say that ‘useless Bills like the present were prejudicial to the progress of sound legislation’!!

In spite of the many measures that have amplified and realised the original aims of the Liberal Act of 1860, the best of which were certainly due to Conservative administrations, the food situation in England still remains in a deplorable condition, and Conservatives continue to be too prone to regard the whole problem as outside their province, to deal drastically with it. Even, however, if we confine the object of Conservatism merely to a negative attitude towards change, we cannot absolve Conservative politicians from the obligation of controlling the nation’s food supply; for it must be obvious that inferior or adulterated food, whether for infants or adults, must lead to change, and change in the direction of impairing the national physique.

With regard to Education, it will not be necessary to enter again into the details of the legislation passed, but only to point out that the gravamen of the charge which should be made against Conservatives for the part they played, not only in endorsing and ratifying Whig measures, but also in initiating measures of their own, consists in their persistently Whig attitude towards the problem. No Conservative ought ever to have been party to a measure which went any way towards establishing free compulsory education. What has been said about the Health Acts also applies here.

¹ Hansard. Vol. CLVI, pp. 2026-27.

Instead of conniving at, and extending, a policy according to which the Government undertook to spend part of the poor man's wages for him before they reached his pocket, and thereby to levy from the whole community a contribution to the wages of the workers which should have been borne by the industries employing them (a policy which was tantamount to a national subsidy to industry), the Conservatives should have stood firmly by the principle of increasing the facilities of the poor in the matter of education, without enslaving them. The difference between a slave and a free workman is that while the former is kept in necessities as a return for his labour, the latter receives the emolument which enables him to procure necessities for himself. And one of the chief advantages of the latter over the former status is that the free labourer can, like his superior in the social rank, develop certain character traits such as independence, self-reliance, self-respect and thrift, which are ultimately useful to the nation as a whole, and the pillar of its spiritual health.

By providing more and more of the working population's necessities out of rates and taxes—a tendency which increased during the nineteenth century, and reached its zenith with the Liberal Act of 1906, by which the working-man's children were actually fed in the schools—we have thus been sliding back to a system of slavery. And one of its worst consequences, already sufficiently apparent, has been the undermining of the character of the English masses. They have lost their independence, self-reliance and thrift, and the responsibility for these losses must rest very largely with the legislature. It was natural in the Whigs and Liberals to abet this policy, for not only were they the special patrons of the towns and of industry, and therefore interested

in keeping down wages, but, in their fantastic and mock-metaphysical attitude they were not concerned with preserving anything so real or valuable as the character of the people. The Royal Commission of 1858, which rejected the idea of free and compulsory education, partly on the ground that it was opposed to the British spirit of individualism, was on the right Conservative track,¹ and it is a pity that their example was not followed by Conservatives later in the century.

It was insufficient, however, merely to oppose Free and Compulsory Education, and to take no steps to see that workmen were receiving enough wages to defray the cost of their children's education themselves. And while the attitude of the 1858 Commission may be applauded, we must still blame the Commissioners for proposing no satisfactory alternative along the lines here suggested. No steps taken for securing a fair competence to the working masses, however, could possibly have helped if at the same time no means were taken to safeguard them against the fierce competition of foreign additions to the 'labour market', and so long as immigrants from all parts were encouraged to come to this country, because, by swelling the supply of labour, they helped to keep down wages, it was hopeless to proceed to an investigation into the conditions of labour and the level of wages.

Any Conservative measure of reform in the 'labour market', therefore, had in the middle of the last century, necessarily to include some such legislation as Mr. Balfour's Aliens' Bill of 1905; and the fact that neither this step nor that concerned with the regulation of wages, was taken, is the best demon-

¹ It should be remembered that this Commission of Inquiry was the direct result of a motion which the Conservative educationalist, Sir John Pakington, had succeeded in carrying.

stration of the supine indifference of the nineteenth-century Conservatives to the principles of their party. The easiest way was to enslave the workers. And this was therefore proceeded with in great earnestness.¹

If only we could discern in the debates over the Act of 1870 a glimmering of the proper Conservative light, a sign of the sound Conservative prejudice, we might at least absolve the Tory Party of the period of any direct complicity in the vicious principles then first established. But, as we all know too well, the point of difference, the heat of the controversy in 1870, was entirely confined to the religious aspects of the measure, and Tories and Conservatives supported Mr. Forster with just as much enthusiasm as moderate Liberals. Not only that: when in 1876 it came to the Tories' turn to contribute an Act on Education to the Statute Book, they extended and confirmed the vicious principle contained in the 1870 Bill, although, as we have seen, they altered the method of its operation. Truly the Conservative in the nineteenth century did not shine.

¹ It was the more unpardonable seeing that in their report of 1861 the Commissioners who had sat on the *Commission appointed to Enquire into the State of Popular Education in England*, had said: 'Almost all the evidence goes to show that though the offer of gratuitous education might be accepted by a certain number of the parents . . . it would in general seem otherwise. The sentiment of independence is strong, and it is wounded by the offer of an absolutely gratuitous education' (p. 73 of the Report, 1861). Then the Commissioners added: 'The feelings which tend to make the offer of gratuitous education unpopular, tend also to incline the parents to pay as large a share as they can reasonably afford of the expense of the education of their children.' (Then follow a number of instances.) And this spirit seemed to be the rule except among 'degraded people' who were indifferent, thriftless and reckless (p. 179 of the Report). The principal reason the Commissioners gave for not recommending compulsory education was that this would necessarily lead to gratuitous education (p. 200 of the Report). Thus the proper spirit existed in the country, though it has since disappeared.

Thus, to-day, we find ourselves saddled with a proletariat largely deteriorated in character through the enslavement they have suffered, and with all this the problem of wages still remains unsolved. So we are practically in the same position with regard to the conditions of labour as we were in 1860, plus a proletariat whose moral fibre has meanwhile been vitiated and almost completely transformed.

It has been said above that no measures taken to adjust wages, and to give the workers a competence that would have maintained them in independence and thrift, could have been effective without a correlative measure safeguarding the British working man from the fierce competition of the immigrant. This, however, is only to state the matter from the point of view of the so-called 'Labour Market'. If, however, we consider it once more from the standpoint of the national character, and of the influence of alien taste upon the national culture, we obtain a second and very cogent argument in favour of legislation which would have kept out the indigent or even the well-to-do foreigner. For it is hopeless to preserve a nation's identity if the blood of its people, and the unity of its culture, are exposed to alien influences on a large scale.¹ And this brings us again to the question of the Jews and Immigration.

We look in vain for any intelligent Conservative comment on these problems throughout the nineteenth

¹ The fact that during the anarchist movement in Europe, when monarchs and heads of States were being assassinated abroad, the English Press was able to boast that our own Royal Family were secure, because the ruck and scum of Europe were hardly likely to foul their one safe asylum (Great Britain), is sufficient proof of the reckless manner with which we allowed our unfortunate working classes to be polluted by the human rubbish of Europe during the nineteenth century. (*Vide* daily press about the time of the Carnot assassination.)

century. Everywhere we see only mystification, and above all sentimentality.

The Whig attitude, being fantastic, is obvious enough. All that was needed was to soar sufficiently high above realities in order to prove conclusively that the Jew was the most desirable of British denizens. And, seeing that no concern about character or culture curbed the eloquence of Whig advocates of Jewish emancipation, we find the wildest nonsense talked in support of the step.

Macaulay, writing in 1829, said: 'If there is any class of people who are not interested, or who do not think themselves interested, in the security of property and the maintenance of order, that class ought to have no share of the powers which exist for the purpose of securing property and maintaining order. But why a man should be less fit to exercise those powers because he wears a beard, because he does not eat ham, because he goes to the synagogue on Saturdays instead of to the Church on Sundays, we cannot conceive.'¹

No, Macaulay certainly could not 'conceive'. A man who thinks that the whole question is one of maintaining order and securing property could not possibly conceive anything that was at all valuable.

Again he wrote: 'The points of difference between Christianity and Judaism have very much to do with a man's fitness to be a bishop or a rabbi. But they have no more to do with his fitness to be a magistrate, a legislator, or a minister of finance, than with his fitness to be a cobbler. Nobody ever thought of compelling cobblers to make any declaration on the true faith of a Christian. . . . On nine hundred and ninety-nine questions out of a thousand, on all ques-

¹ Statement of the Civil Disabilities and Privations affecting Jews in England (London, 1829).

tions of police, of finance, of civil and criminal law, of foreign policy, the Jew, as a Jew, has no interest hostile to that of the Christian, or even to that of the Churchman,'¹ and so on for many passages. It is all so plausible, so sweetly reasonable, so convincing, and so wildly beside the point! Nobody fit to be considered as a thinker at all would ever question more than one or two of the propositions laid down with such fatuous assurance by Macaulay. The one point, however, which would have made havoc of all his argumentation—the point concerning the national character and the different culture-potential, not as between Jew and Gentile or Jew and Christian, but between Jew and Englishman (which is the real problem), Macaulay, being a Whig, naturally never raised. And yet, in this question, it is the only point that must be faced with courage and honesty. Macaulay was always glib and superficial, and I have rated him sufficiently elsewhere for these qualities. Indeed it is probable that he still owes the greater part of his popularity to the childlike transparency and shallowness of his mind.² But in this essay on the disabilities of the Jews, he is so palpably shallow that it is surprising it did not discredit his judgment for all time.³

Between the Jews and the English, it is not so much a matter of a difference of religion as a difference of temperament and cultural gifts. Both may be

¹ Op. cit.

² The fact that his contemporary, De Quincey, a much more profound and able writer, never achieved anything like the same success, is a significant comment not only on nineteenth century literary fame, but also upon nineteenth century criticism.

³ When, however, a man is allowed to make the remark about Charles I, which Macaulay made in the *Edinburgh Review* of December, 1831 (see my comment on this in my *Defence of Aristocracy*, p. 280), without losing his reputation as a sane writer, everything is possible.

good and desirable in their way. The question is, can they be mixed to advantage? Can the ethnic integrity of the English survive without loss not merely a mixture of blood with the Jew, but the influence of the Jew on their culture? Can the Jew, in solving an English national problem, solve it in a way which will preserve English character and maintain English traditions? These are questions that a glib womanly thinker like Macaulay could not be expected to formulate, much less to meet. And it is sad to record that no Conservative Party in the nineteenth century propounded them either. The Tories, it is true, showed their hand, by consistently resisting the measures that were proposed to remove the disabilities of the Jews; but in their opposition they advanced reasons which even a feeble thinker like Macaulay was easily able to refute. So long as the main argument rested upon the difference between Jew and Christian, it was obviously too mystic and transcendental to carry much weight; and thus, in the debate in the Lords on June the 23rd, 1834, when the Bill repealing the Civil Disabilities of the Jews was read for a second time, the Marquess of Westminster, in supporting the measure, spoke very much as Macaulay might have spoken. From the terms of his discourse we may estimate the nature of the opposition he expected to meet. He said: 'It was monstrously absurd to suppose that the Jews, who were comparatively such a very small portion of our population, could gain anything like an influence in the affairs of this country. The Jews were powerful at the latter end of the reigns of the Pagan, and at the commencement of those of the Christian Emperors, and if they could not retard the progress of Christianity when it was in its infancy, was it likely they

could do so in its maturity?'¹ And his whole defence of the measure was confined chiefly to this line of reasoning.

The Earls of Malmesbury and Winchelsea, and the Marquess of Westmeath, in opposing the Bill, retorted by emphasising the arguments drawn from the need of protecting Christianity. The latter even spoke of the danger of allowing the Jews to 'un-Christianise the Legislature', and so on.² No one advanced the view that it is fatal to try to mix characters and cultures. No one seemed to recognise the principle that a nation with individuality is after all a segregated ethnic unit, and that if its identity is to be preserved and its institutions are to retain their type, it must be protected from the influence of other segregated peoples, whose cultural index, so to speak, must be incompatible and therefore undesirably modifying.

Perhaps the Earl of Malmesbury came nearer to a clear view of the issue when he called the attention of his fellow peers to the wretched state of Poland, where the Jews owned all the land, and when he reminded his listeners that the Jews were not hand workers, etc. Here, without rising to the level of stating any general principle, he at least pointed to some of those traits of the Jewish character which indicated that the Jews were temperamentally incompatible with the English; and when he exclaimed: 'If they admitted a Jew to full participation of civil rights, why not admit a Mahometan, or a Chinese? Where were they to stop?'³ he came very near to challenging the Upper House to recognise the principle here laid down.

On the whole, however, although the Bill was

¹ Hansard. Vol. XXIV, p. 722.

² *Ibid.* p. 731.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 722-723.

defeated, the opposition was feeble and unenlightened, and it is not surprising that, with such infirm arguments, to sustain it, it ultimately melted away or was overcome as the century wore on.

It cannot be repeated too often that the alternative was not, as it was constantly made to appear, between kindness and unkindness, generosity and meanness, but between preserving or sacrificing the identity of the nation. If national rulership had always been a matter of brains then certainly the Jews should have been welcome even as legislators, for they are a clever and genial race, rising to great heights of intellectual power, and displaying this power in a higher proportion of individuals than do the English. But national rulership is always much more than a matter of brains. It is a matter also of national taste and character, and it is impossible to overcome this objection. To introduce sentiment into the question was, therefore, to confuse the issue. In politics, as in every other branch of human achievement, the one thing that ought always to be held clearly and steadily before consciousness is the object to be achieved. If our object is to be pleasant, hospitable and open-hearted at all costs, then, by all means, let us do what Lord Malmesbury suggested a hundred years ago, and invite the influence of the Chinaman and the Mahometan at our Council Board. If, however, our object as Conservatives is to preserve our nation in every sense, then obviously our policy must be different.¹

Those who to-day are wont to inveigh against the vicious element in Socialistic and Communistic politics, which consists in opposing an international to a purely

¹ As I speak as an avowed friend of Jews, and count many prominent and gifted Jews among my acquaintances, I cannot be suspected of expressing narrow prejudice or resentment in the attitude I assume.

national view of political activity, are inclined to forget that this alleged vicious element of internationalism is already established in the sphere of high finance. And, if here, too, it is to be deprecated—as I certainly think it is—we cannot altogether dissociate the influence of that great international figure *par excellence*, the Jew, from the result which we see before us. Moreover, if as critics of our period, we come to the conclusion that the bulk of our middle-class population, particularly in urban centres, is to-day engaged in businesses which are specially favoured by Jews themselves—trading agencies of all kinds, money-lending undertakings, including banks, stock and share concerns, insurance, and middle-men activities, all offering occupations of the kind with which, throughout the Middle Ages, the Jew was chiefly connected—we should not forget the element of Jewish influence which, long before the legal emancipation of the Jews, was already well established in these islands.¹ Nor can we entirely exclude the fact of Jewish influence, when we consider the vicious development of the functionless ownership of property, which ever since the Grand Rebellion, has constituted one of the worst aspects of modern capitalism. To own property without responsibility, to own industrial interests without performing any function in regard to industry, these are two of the developments which ever since the Commonwealth have done most to bring discredit upon Capitalistic organisation; and, in the sense that they are inseparable from the purely usurious character of the modern financial control of trade, we are justified in at least

¹ The acknowledgment of this fact marks the one bright passage in Macaulay's essay. Speaking of the Jews before their civil disabilities were removed, he says: 'In fact the Jews are now not excluded from political power. They possess it; and as long as they are allowed to accumulate large fortunes they must possess it.' (Op. cit.)

formulating the question whether the return of the Jews in large numbers, ever since 1656, may not have had something to do with this un-English development of the country's economic organisation.¹

There is, moreover, this serious view to be taken of the Jewish question—a view which, to the best of my knowledge, does not appear to have been stated elsewhere—namely, that since the Jew approaches the society in which he resides, more or less as a stranger, he and those he influences will naturally strive to break down as far as possible all the barriers in that society which tend to perpetuate his strangeness, or to bar his access to complete citizenship. This means that the Jew's form of power—wealth—will find itself opposed to all other kinds of power, such as Gentile aristocratic lineage, Gentile aristocratic character and prestige, hereditary honours of all kinds, and, above all, national solidarity (by this I mean loyalty between the various classes), which are all things that cannot be bought, which have no market price, and which the Jew cannot get possession of, or form part of, no matter how rich he is. Now where the Jew becomes powerful, it will be found that these things tend to fall ever more deeply into disrepute, and the tendency will be to make rank, status, citizenship, nationality and prestige depend entirely upon purchasable symbols, or outward signs—whether these happen to be titles, honours, a reputation for charitable or patriotic munificence, valuable old masters, or expensive horses and cars. Hence the inevitable association of Jews in Germany, France, England and elsewhere, with a Liberal plutocratic order of society, standing opposed to a proud here-

¹ Those who know my *Defence of Aristocracy* will remember how, until the death of Charles I, the government took steps to oppose capitalistic exploitation as we now understand it.

ditary aristocracy struggling to uphold tradition, lineage, the national character and inter-class loyalty. The fact that anarchy is always next door to a Liberal plutocratic order of society, lends a note of gravity to this view of the Jewish question, which it is only prudent to appreciate at its proper worth, without the exaggerations either of emotional bias or panic. And those who see in the last eighty years of English political life, a tendency to depreciate all those symbols of honour and prestige, which cannot be bought or acquired by wealth, and who find even powerful Gentiles in the land now advocating and promoting this tendency, might do well to enquire into the influence of the Jew, and the benefits ultimately reverting to him through the success of this development.¹

Had Conservatives truly and loyally played their part, all this could not have happened. But, to study the controversy from its inception, is to become convinced that they never faced the problem as it should have been faced. Vague feelings of revolt moved them to oppose the admission of the Jew to civil rights. But the deeper question—whether it was at all desirable to allow the Jew to influence our character and culture by miscegenation on the one hand, and the power of his taste and temperament on the other, was never, and is still not properly understood.²

¹ In this regard it is interesting to note the active propaganda now being carried on by powerful Liberal Jewish journals in modern democratic Germany against all ideas of race, lineage and heredity. Those who are inclined to think of Disraeli in this connection, and of his many references to the need of aristocracy and race, should bear in mind two things: (*a*) that he was a single Jew struggling for his own advancement, and that his association with the British Aristocracy was part of his climbing tactics; and (*b*) that he was, as I have shown, always careful to speak only mystically about race and blood.

² The figure usually given for the total number of Jews in the

Turning now to Immigration and the problem of the alien, there were from the start two objects to be achieved—the preservation of the national character, health and culture, and the protection of the masses against the fierce competition of alien paupers, alien skilled artisans,¹ and adventurers of all kinds. In the previous chapter we have seen how wholly haphazard has been the legislation in regard to these two ends. And although we are well aware that, on the whole, Tory prejudice has coincided with that of the nation at large in remaining hostile to foreign penetration, the Tory, particularly in recent years, has been much too lax in dealing with this question.

How splendidly the Tories of the late seventeenth century shine in contrast! The Conservative instincts of the nation were then so strong that, when in 1693, a Bill for the Naturalisation of Foreign Protestants was debated in the Commons, Sir John Knight, the Tory Member for Bristol, declared that the Naturalisation Bill would bring ‘as great affliction on this nation as ever fell upon the Egyptians’. It was alleged that by intermarriage they would blot out the English race!²

Who speaks like this now? Who even thinks like this now? And yet it is only realistic to do so. It was the Tories who took the lead in the anti-alien United Kingdom is 300,000. But it should be remembered that this is based upon the religious congregations. In addition to these, therefore, we ought to reckon the non-religious Jews, the Jews who do not profess themselves as such, of which there is a vast number, and the half and quarter Jews, who are the outcome of miscegenation. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the total number is something nearer to 1,000,000 than to 300,000.

¹ The ancient monarchs who encouraged the influx of alien artisans of particular trades, to found new industries, can at least be excused on the score of expediency. But the uncontrolled inflow of aliens of all kinds up to the Act of 1905, hardly comes under this head.

² Roylance Kent. (Op. cit. pp. 440–441.)

demonstration that occurred in the reign of William III. It was the Tories who, on the question of miscegenation—so important in regard to preservation—showed themselves the national party in these early days of their history; and it was the Whig pamphleteer, Defoe, who, in pursuance of the romantic ideology of his party, did most to undermine the sound English dislike of the foreigner. ‘The Englishman’s supercilious attitude of mind towards the foreigner,’ says Mr. Roylance Kent, ‘he helped to make appear ridiculous and to become an unfashionable trait.’¹ Yes, but there was profound wisdom in this ‘supercilious attitude’. England is paying heavily for having abandoned it.

Democratic institutions tend inevitably to destroy the belief in national purity and good stock. Miscegenation might even be regarded as the peculiar vice of democracy. And with the triumph of democratic principles throughout the nineteenth century, it was natural that national pride and the jealousy of the foreigner should decline. Nevertheless, this did not excuse the Conservative for joining in the general stampede towards disintegration and confusion, and the Acts of 1844 and 1870, both Tory in their origin,² reveal the extent to which the feelings of the party towards the foreigner had changed in under two centuries.

It may be argued that these measures meant little; that, indeed, the actual privilege of easy naturalisation did not contribute much towards either increasing the number, or multiplying the evil consequences of the foreigner in England. This is probably true. The

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 446.

² The Naturalization Act of 1870 was passed by a Liberal administration, but the Commission which led to it was appointed in 1868, and it was the result of a pledge made to the United States by a Tory government.

evils affecting the character, culture, and the struggle for existence among the masses, which were directly traceable to unregulated immigration, were allowed to go on all through the century, irrespective of the legislation dealing with naturalisation. But in a political treatise it is only possible to measure the warmth or coolness of certain parties towards the different policies of the State, by describing their attitude towards definite legislative measures, and it is therefore convenient to demonstrate the decline of the jealous Tory feeling against foreigners by showing the Tory attitude to the two Bills in question.

Needless to say that, in the debates on the Naturalisation Bill, both in the Commons and the Lords, not a sign of the old Tory spirit was manifested. And, at the time of the Second Reading of the Bill in the Commons on April 25th, 1870, no mention was made of ethnic difficulties.

That the laxity and indifference which these debates reveal were unwise, may be seen from many recent developments in the nation; and if the working population ever recognise the crime that was committed against their character, their peace, and their chance of employment, by the ruthless manner in which their ranks were allowed to be swelled by immigrants from every quarter of Europe during the nineteenth century, they must be forgiven if they feel a very bitter grudge indeed against that party whose chief responsibility was their guidance and protection. Seeing that I speak as a grandson of one of the very aliens who were naturalised under the Act of 1870, I can hardly be suspected of venting any private or personal prejudice against the foreigner, or against the legislation that facilitated his acquiring the rights of a subject in this country; and when I claim that for over a hundred years the whole attitude

of the Tory Party to this question was unpatriotic, dilatory and shortsighted, I believe that there is ample evidence to support me. No Conservative mindful of his principles and responsibilities should have departed from the position of the Tories of 1693.

To complain now of the spirit which, in the working classes, has led to the abuse and the inordinate use of the dole, to marvel at the transformation which has made the English masses, once notoriously independent, self-reliant and proud, accept Socialistic and Communistic doctrine, so foreign to the particularist character of the nation, and to bewail the passing of the Nordic element in the country and its replacement by Mediterranean stock,¹ is merely to register our recognition of some of the results which, though partly due to unwise and enslaving legislation, must be very largely ascribed to the indiscriminate flooding of our urban communities by foreign stock of more or less desirable quality. And, in judging the Conservative in history and in practice, we ought not to forget the manner in which he has connived at the perpetration of this crime against his nation's identity.

Enough has been said on the attitude of Conservatives towards Factory Legislation to convince us not only of the belatedness of their action, but also of the credit due to them, or to prominent members of their party, in carrying the measures in this department which ultimately became law. We must, however, remember that the nature of these measures was, in

¹ Anthropologists, or merely apologists, have recently been interpreting this phenomenon as the outcome of the fact that the Mediterranean stock of England flourishes best in urban conditions, and that as urbanisation has increased it has favoured the multiplication of this stock at the expense of the Nordic stock. This may be a contributory cause of the decline of the Nordic element in our midst, but wholesale immigration of foreign blood must also have played its part in producing the change.

ultimate analysis, more humane than economic, more merciful than constructive. True they limited hours, and imposed certain restrictions in regard to age and sex; but on the whole, they lead to the suspicion that if the treatment of women and children in industry and the mines had been considerate and civilised from the start, nothing would have been done to interfere with the natural development of industry.

In saying this it is not intended to detract from the great merits of Lord Shaftesbury and his colleagues in the noble fight they waged to protect the poor victims of capitalistic exploitation from the worst consequences of the system; for a sufficiently high tribute has already been paid to them on this score. It is merely desired to point to a certain grave omission on the part of Conservatives in general in dealing with the whole phenomenon of Industrial growth.

To safeguard the interests of wretched women and children was in the highest degree urgent and necessary, and the Liberal opposition to this legislation is as unpardonable from a national point of view as it is self-revelatory from the standpoint of Liberal politics. But what was equally necessary and urgent was to organise growing industries so as to prevent: (*a*) functionless ownership; and (*b*) division between owners and workers, and a difference of interest between them. The Middle Ages, which probably understood everything better than does our Muddle Age (except, of course, mechanism of all kinds), had set an example which it was foolhardy to overlook. Mediæval industries formed corporate wholes, in which masters and workers functioned as units answerable to the State, and guaranteed a public service both qualitatively and quantitatively in return for certain privileges. Without constituting a department of the State in the sense of the Socialist's notion

of nationalisation, they functioned in close connection with the State, which was above all concerned in securing service to the public at large.

To refer to the brewing industry alone, for instance, I have shown in my *Defence of Aristocracy*¹ that it was incumbent upon the brewers in the Middle Ages and later, to keep up an adequate supply of good ale, just as nowadays we insist upon a proper supply of good water. The brewers were not allowed to inconvenience the public by a sudden reduction of their output on the ground, say, that the State-regulated prices did not cover the working expenses, or on any other plea. Public service was expected from the industry as a whole, in return for certain privileges granted by the State, and any dereliction from duty on the part of the industry was severely dealt with.

It is, however, obvious that to render this possible, the industry must function as a unit. The moment there could be any line of cleavage between the workers in the industry on the one hand, and the masters on the other, it would become quite impossible for the State to insist upon service, because the State would have no united corporation with which it could deal, and which was enjoying the privileges granted as a single body.

This is a big subject; but there is no reason why it cannot be briefly outlined here, for the principle is clear enough.²

It was manifestly reckless and shortsighted on the part of the statesmen of the late eighteenth and the whole of the nineteenth century, to allow the great and leading industries of the country to develop along haphazard and unregulated lines; and this criticism applies more particularly to the various

¹ Page 211.

² On this whole question, see William Sanderson, *Statecraft*.

administrations who watched the growth of those key industries on which the life of the nation chiefly depended.

From the beginning some attempt should have been made to model the new activities of the people upon the pattern supplied by the Middle Ages, and, in this attempt, the following guiding principles should have been observed:

(a) To achieve an organisation by means of which service could be guaranteed and quality ensured in return for certain national privileges.

(b) To unify each industry so that the masters and workers constituted a corporate whole.

(c) To secure functional ownership, so that masters and men might retain a human and humane relationship.

And finally, (d) To forestall the mischievous separatist influence of the Trade Unions¹ by demonstrating to the industries and their workers a zeal for their protection, which the workers would then have had no need to supplement or to supply by organisations of their own.

The vices of modern capitalism are not, as the Socialist would have us believe, inherent in capitalism in general; for capitalism has always existed, and the vices manifested in modern capitalistic States are of recent growth. The vices of modern capitalism are due wholly to the fact that it has never been properly controlled,² and that the human element in industrial life was rated too cheaply from the start.

To treat working men like a commodity; to let them suffer like other marketable produce all the

¹ It should not be forgotten that the growth of the Trade Union movement in England was the result of a need felt, and very justifiably felt, by the workers to protect themselves. If they had been protected from above the need would not have been felt.

² See on this point my *Defence of Aristocracy*, Chapter II.

fluctuations and perturbations created by supply and demand; to gorge the market with foreign recruits in order to keep down wages; to destroy their thrift so that they too might gorge the market with their offspring; to treat the human factor in production like a machine; and to overlook the essential binding force of all societies, which is personal attachment, personal obligation, personal duty, and personal influence, was, of course, fantastic to a degree so prodigious that it is almost incredible that the system should have lasted as long as it has.

It ought to have been seen from the beginning that any purely mechanistic adjustment of human relations, of master and worker, of consumer and producer, was bound to culminate in a deadlock, because human nature is provided with impulses and sentiments which will not tolerate such negativism. This is not romance but realism. It is romantic to suppose that this realistic view can be neglected with any success.

As a Party which had no particular interest in exploiting the masses, and which had no very binding pact with industry, the Conservatives, had they remained loyal to their principles, would have recognised all this—not only because it is more humane, but also because it is more prudent, more intelligent to do so. For where there is no human bond there is bound to be inhuman cleavage.

Furthermore, in dealing with every great industry, it should have been seen from the start that the State always had certain very substantial privileges to grant, with which it could barter and bargain. The railways, for instance, afford a singularly illuminating lesson of what is meant by this peculiar position of the State. And to some extent, the State profited by its position in order to secure terms from the

railways at the very beginning, which were to the advantage of the public at large.¹ But in this it did not go nearly far enough. It ought to have availed itself of its advantages as a bargainer with something essential to yield, in order to insist on the organisation of the railway systems on the basis indicated above. It ought at least to have secured the public interest to the extent of stipulating that each railway must function as a corporate whole, and not as a joint concern, each essential part of which had different interests. To allow such a division in the very root was to court serious trouble in the future. And although profit and quick returns were probably more readily secured by the haphazard fashion in which the railway companies were allowed to grow up, it would have required very little more judgment than was actually shown to place them on a basis of permanent corporate efficiency, which would have made such a disaster as the complete dislocation of the nation's transport an impossibility for all time.

What applies to the railways also applies to other industries and particularly to the mines, where the State's intervention was emphatically indicated.

At the root of the whole madness, however, which characterises the organisation of industry in this country—and the rest of Europe merely followed where we led—will be found the inhumanity of considering the paid worker in every industry merely as a machine; for, when once this inhumanity is corrected, it is immediately seen that industry must be organised on a more rational basis. The fatal tendency in the Puritan-Whig-Liberal tradition to deal with fantastic abstractions as if they were realities, and to organise national life on the basis of meta-

¹ Maximum mileage charges, freight charges, and other conditions of service.

physical presuppositions such as 'Capital' and 'Labour'¹—the latter representing merely a necessary outlay in production—ought not to have infected the Tory and Conservative Party. But it certainly did, and with the result that to-day our industries, through internal division, are in a state of such chaos, and the human element, 'Labour', is so much estranged and far removed from the interests of 'Capital', that nothing can be done except either to tolerate an increase of socialistic reform, or else, at this late stage, to inaugurate as a radical measure of reconstruction the system of industry recommended above. The social and political advantages of this reconstructive measure will be referred to later.

It is by no means too late to reorganise industry along the lines suggested. In fact, if Communism and Socialism are to be resisted, it will have to be done. But think how much more difficult the task is now, with our proletariat a class apart, almost an ethnic subdivision, permeated with class hatred, rendered distrustful through the inhumanity with which they have been treated; and our markets so far reduced by foreign imitation of our methods, that the changes which are necessary will have to be effected, as it were in mid-stream, precisely at a moment in our history when the utmost smoothness and serenity of our productive organisation would be needed in order to enable us to hold our own!

It is impossible to absolve the Tory Party of the chief blame for the position in which we now find ourselves, because they are the only party whose principles might have enabled them to save the

¹ Mr. Maurice Woods puts it very well when he says: 'Liberalism indeed has inherited from the French Encyclopædists the passion for abstract conceptions, for treating life as a proposition in Euclid, and men as if they could be arranged in a geometrical pattern like so many bricks.' (Op. cit p. 360.)

situation. 'Unless it is a national Party,' said Disraeli, 'the Tory Party is nothing.'¹ And, as a national party, uncommitted to any industrial faction, it had a free hand. Nothing that the Puritan-Whig-Liberal fraternity ever proposed; no element in their fantastic ideology, could ever have prevented the state of England from being what it is to-day; nothing in their policy indeed could have made this state as good as it is to-day. For in terrestrial affairs it is fatal to rely on romantic abstractions and to leave the terra firma of realism. But the Conservative Party was peculiarly suited to tackle the problem of modern industry at its inception, and to solve it in a manner satisfactory to England and to the whole world. The fact that it shirked the deeper questions connected with these problems in its promotion of the Factory Acts is a proof of what I claim. Its whole policy as a protector of the masses, as the popular party, as a party chiefly of landed interests, and therefore not wedded to the rapid material success of industry; and, above all, as a professor of realism, constituted it the appointed heir to this vast modern responsibility of organising modern life as the Church, and the Kings of the Middle Ages had organised mediæval life. The pattern was there. Its principles only required to be applied afresh. The Conservative Party should have given industry its place, its duties, its proper relation to the State and to the public. It should have made the workers in industry an essential organ of the whole body, at once helping to support its life and vitally interested in its prosperity and preservation, visibly drawing and giving energy, with an intimate relation to every branch, from the ruling brains to the financial foundation. The difference between

¹ Speech at the Crystal Palace, June 24th, 1872. (*Selected Speeches of the Earl of Beaconsfield*. Vol. II, p. 524.)

worker and master should have been merely functional, not a difference of interest, nor necessarily one of outlook and duty. And the whole of each industry should have been so connected to the State as to lose its privileges if its service failed.

The fact that the Conservative Party failed to achieve this task—aye—that it failed to see that this task was necessary, is probably the best evidence we have of its universally alleged lack of intelligence and ideas.

Chapter V

RELIGION AND THE CONSTITUTION

MACHIAVELLI, who was probably the greatest political thinker Europe has ever seen, accused the French of not understanding statecraft, because they allowed the Church to reach such greatness in their nation.¹

Certainly the lesson of the Middle Ages was to the effect that Church and State were only too frequently in conflict, and unless a European monarch had either come to an agreement with Rome, or had, like the aristocratic rulers of Venice, wisely insisted on controlling ecclesiastical affairs in his own state, his authority was never secure. At any moment the Church, as the spiritual and moral guide of Christendom, might intervene, and champion the cause either of his subjects or of his enemies, against him, and entirely paralyse his government. Thus, to many writers, among whom is Palgrave, the Church is believed to have been 'the corner-stone' even of English liberty, by the support which it gave to the people, probably only in its own interest, against the power of the ruling authorities.² A recent writer, the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, speaks of the Church as representing 'a special source of strife', because it is 'a state within the State'³; and when we remember that the Christian religion, unlike the Jewish, the Greek, the Egyptian and the Roman, is an international or Catholic religion, aiming at universality,

¹ *The Prince*. Chapter III.

² See his *History of the Anglo-Saxons*. Chapter III.

³ *An Introduction to English Politics*, p. 400.

and calling itself universal, we have to recognise in its presence in the nation, not only a state within the state, but in some respects a foreign state within the state. In Christian Europe, therefore, temporal interests were sharply differentiated from religious interests from the beginning. That splendid social integration, which in Israel, Egypt, Greece and Rome, made attachment to the State at once attachment to the religion identified with the State, and which therefore made for unity and single-mindedness in patriotic endeavour, was never properly speaking the heritage of any European people after the conversion of Europe to Christianity; and this has naturally had many unhappy consequences.

It may seem absurd and pathetically feeble, according to our modern notions, that the Jews and the Egyptians should in their conflicts have appealed to their respective deities for help and succour. But we should remember that the spectacle of the Germans and the English, each claiming that the same God was on their particular side in the Great War, would have seemed equally ridiculous and feeble to the ancient Jews and Egyptians. From the standpoint of nationality, therefore, Christianity, like high finance, is a disturbing force, because it is an international force. And the only way, on the temporal side, to deal satisfactorily with it and the Church which organised it, was either to master its local representatives as the Venetians did, or else to establish a private national branch of it as Henry VIII did.

It may be true, as Cobbett pointed out, that the principal motives of the Reformation in England were greed and wealth-seeking,¹ and certainly in his

¹ In writing on this subject he says that the chief motive was 'plunder'. (See Vol. II of his *History of the Reformation in England*, published in London in 1829. Introduction.)

illuminating history of the movement he brings a very imposing mass of evidence to support his claim. As he was a Protestant himself, his point of view is at least free from the suspicion of partisanship; but, whatever its validity may be, it ought not to blind us to that other motive, which must have been fairly strong in the case of European monarchs of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to free themselves for good from a power like the Holy Catholic Church, which, being international, was in many ways in conflict with purely national aims. Some colour is lent to this view by the fact that Henry VIII never planned and never intended to supplant Catholicism by a new religion. All he wished to achieve was that the English Church should become a free national branch of Christianity—a sort of semi-independent offshoot with himself and his successors on the throne as its local chief. There were a score of political reasons for this innovation, quite apart from the tempting spectacle of the Church's wealth.¹ But it may be admitted that neither Henry VIII nor his advisers and supporters were sufficiently free from cupidity to disregard the lure of rich plunder as an additional inducement to proceed with the act of separation.

At all events, in spite of Henry's and Elizabeth's

¹ See *A History of the Tory Party, 1640-1714*, by Keith Feiling (Oxford, 1924), pp. 24-25: 'The Tudors launched their Reformation not according to the pure word of God, or at the inspiration of a Luther, but rather by piecemeal legislation, by preserving all they could of Rome except Roman hegemony, and by binding to this remodelled system their subjects' material interests and their national pride.' Only one objection may be raised to this view of Mr. Feiling's, and that is, that the expression, 'subjects' material interests', is equivocal. If it means the interests of the most powerful subjects, it is true. If, however, it means the whole nation subject to the monarch it is most decidedly misleading; for the mass of the people did not find their best interests secured by the breach with Rome.

fidelity to Catholic ritual and tradition, it was inevitable that the breach with Rome should ultimately be seized upon by the English Reformers as an opportunity to shape the national branch of Christianity according to their fancy; and thus it came about that a change originally intended partly as a means of fortifying temporal authority within the nation, against the international force of Catholicism, ultimately produced a schism which in doctrine and ritual became a distinct Church. The political advantage was that the Church had at least become a national concern: 'British made'. The political disadvantages, which were certainly not seen at the time, were that, although the English King was the head, the principle of authority had received a blow from which it has not yet, and probably never will recover.

The Tories, as hereditary supporters of the Crown and Church, were, therefore, from the beginning, saddled with a religious institution which, from the standpoint of the Tory belief in authority, subordination and order, was a pure anomaly. While it spent much energy and created much opposition by making rules and establishing doctrine, the source of all strength in religious and every other kind of regulation—Authority—had been sacrificed by its own deed of separation; and this was to have the most unexpected consequences.

The Lollards and early reformers had been persecuted because it was recognised that their destructive doctrines menaced not only the faith, but also the social order of the nation.¹ They believed in the Bible as the infallible guide to all necessary truth, and would not acknowledge that the right of interpreting it

¹ *A History of the Church of England* (edited by the Very Rev. W. R. W. Stephens, D.D., F.S.A., and the Rev. William Hunt, M.A.). Vol. II, p. 60.

belonged to any especially instructed body. On the contrary, they held that its correct meaning was revealed to all humble-minded Christians.¹ And thus they set up the doctrine of private judgment, which, while it was ultimately to be used as a means of opposing the authority of the Pope, by both English and German Protestants, also became the great corrosive of authority and tradition in matters unconnected with religious controversy. When Luther claimed the right of the 'individual conscience' to decide matters of great moment in religion, he rested his claim on the belief that the individual conscience was authoritative; was, in fact, the only authority that could contend with the great authority of Rome.² He told men they could be their own priests, if they chose,³ and that Christ had obtained this prerogative for them. This was almost the same claim that had been made by the early English reformers. And thus, in De Quincey's succinct phraseology, Protestantism meant no more than 'the self-sufficingness of the Bible, and the right of private judgment'.⁴ Now, seeing that De Quincey wrote not only as a deep student of the subject, but also as a staunch advocate of Protestantism, we cannot suspect him of prejudice when he states the case for Protestantism in this way.

It is obvious, however, that this alleged right of private judgment is a most anarchical doctrine, subversive of all authority and order, and a prescription guaranteeing to incite megalomania all round. Up to the very moment when Henry VIII, by defying the

¹ *A History of the Church of England*. Vol. II, p. 60.

² *A Treatise Touching the Libertie of a Christian*, by Martyne Luther (translated from the Latin by James Bell, 1579. Edited by W. Bengo' Collyer, 1817), p. 17.

³ *Ibid.* p. 31.

⁴ *Collected Writings* (A. and C. Black, Vol. VIII, p. 257).

Pope, cleared the way for the Reform movement in England, the 'best people' regarded its principles with horror, and there are some who maintain that the separation from Rome was effected against the will of the people at large.¹ The people of cultivation certainly appear to have been strongly opposed to the tenets of the Reform movement, for we are told that Dr. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, who died in 1519, is 'the only conspicuous instance of a man of highly cultivated mind being charged with heretical tendencies.'²

The fact that the anarchical principle of the right of private judgment forms the basis of all the Reformed Churches, is unfortunate from the point of view of the Tory and Conservative position. For while it is quite clear that as a claim it cannot remain confined to religious questions—indeed, seeing that it is allowed in religious questions, which are the most important of all, why should it not spread to questions of lesser import, such as politics, ethics, æsthetics, etc.?—it must soon become a disruptive and subsersive influence in national life.³ The ignorant dolt who claims

¹ See *Lollardy and the Reformation in England*. By John Gairdner, C.B. Vol. I, p. 5. 'It was only after an able and despotic King had proved himself stronger than the spiritual power of Rome that the people of England were divorced from the Roman allegiance; and there is abundant evidence that they were divorced from it at first against their will. . . . It was a contest, not of the English people, but of the King and his Government, with Rome.'

² *A History of the Church of England*. Vol. IV, pp. 60–61.

³ Nor do Protestants need to seek very far for a justification of this extension of the right of private judgment to other matters. They need only turn to the scriptures which are their guide. In 1 Corinthians vi. 2, St. Paul says: 'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?' No Protestant who was allowed by his Church to learn this inflammatory doctrine ever doubted that he could judge the smallest matters. And St. Paul

the right to form an independent judgment concerning the nature of the great and mysterious Power behind phenomena, and his relationship to it, need think nothing of forming an independent judgment concerning the relative merits of Communism and Individualism, of Tariff Reform and Free Trade. And the consequence is that order and subordination become very difficult indeed.

Now the national Church of England, which the Tories and Conservatives have always made it their special duty to support and protect, reveals by the very state of wild disorder in its own house, how vicious is the principle on which its schismatic position is based. No two bishops insist on the same dogmas, or profess the same doctrine; and the three hundred and sixty-five dissenting bodies, which, by exercising the right of private judgment in metaphysical and ritualistic matters, have severed themselves from the English branch of the Reformed Church, are only a further proof of the extreme chaos to which the lack of authority and the exaltation of private opinion have led.¹

But all this confusion was inevitable. It would have been, and indeed was, accurately foretold by everyone who, from the beginning, assessed the absurd principle of the right of private judgment at its proper value. And the fact that this principle now occupies a central position in the national ideology, proceeds: 'Know ye not that ye shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?' There is no limit to the arrogance to which this kind of thing may lead.

¹ As A. W. Benn very properly remarks in *Modern England* (Vol. I, p. 66), in speaking of the Church at the beginning of the nineteenth century: 'The Church of England, while remaining nominally orthodox, had in practice become a teacher of what amounted to little more than a purely ethical religion, insisting on no dogmas beyond a personal God, and a future life as sanctions of morality.'

and is applied to every department of the national life, makes modern England little better than a home of raging amateurism and quackery. Its state is one of almost complete anarchy, kept in a condition faintly resembling order only owing (*a*) to the bad, impoverished or debilitated health of the individuals composing the nation, and (*b*) to their extraordinary inability to carry a principle boldly to its logical conclusion. A generation suffering from bad teeth, chronic constipation, tonsillitis, rheumatism and nervous exhaustion, does not become obstreperous no matter how inflammable its doctrines may be; and those who, in England, are too ready to glory over the fact that such crises as the late General Strike may be overcome without violence or bloodshed, should bear in mind that there is such a thing as slow and silent decay—the disintegration that proceeds almost imperceptibly under a serene and polished surface—and that this may betoken less health, less vigour and less spirit than a violent and spirited outburst.

The fact that decay, not only of institutions, but also of the national physique, is inevitable, where every nobody can assert his judgment as if he were somebody, I have shown with sufficient detail elsewhere.¹ It follows from the fact that since the majority have not the sound taste to distinguish mere disintegrative change from progress, majority rule must mean disintegration. But majority rule is implicit in the right of private judgment.

As I have said, for a political party like that of English Conservatism, which professes to be the upholder of authority, subordination and order, it was unfortunate that the national Church should not

¹ See my *Defence of Aristocracy*, where the lethal effect of Democracy on the life of the nation is an essential part of my thesis.

only have been the defender of a principle so disorderly as the right of private judgment, but that it should also have reached a state of such appalling chaos, precisely through this principle. And there can be no doubt that English Conservatives, as distinct from ancient Egyptian, Chinese and Jewish Conservatives, have been most unfairly handicapped by the ecclesiastical polity which they have been obliged to carry along with them through the last four centuries.

Thus, although it is easy to understand those historians who think Charles II foolish for having clung to Catholicism all his life, and James II and the Pretender quixotic for having lost a throne on account of it—for, as they are fond of pointing out, Catholicism always introduced a foreign authority frequently in conflict with the King's—it is impossible not to sympathise with Charles II's view, that Catholicism was after all more compatible than Protestantism with authority in general, if only owing to the fact that it does not admit the right of private judgment nearly as fully as Protestantism does.¹

When we remember that, in addition, many Christian doctrines and valuations, when once they are divorced from the firm and orderly framework of Catholicism and the rest of the Church's teaching, become susceptible of being used for revolutionary purposes—such doctrines and valuations as the equality of men; the hostility to riches; the desirability of 'unselfishness'; the virtuousness of sacrificing the greater to the less; the notion that there is such a thing as a universal and immanent justice (which in the popular mind appears to be violated when one child is born in a slum and another in Park Lane);

¹ In his interesting Essay on Private Judgment (*Essays, Critical and Historical*, Vol. II, XIV), Cardinal Newman restricts the principle very definitely to the right of selecting a guide or a teacher.

and the duty to do unto others that which we would they should do unto us—the Conservative elements in the population of England were faced in Protestantism with doctrinal difficulties which greatly complicated their task. And these doctrinal difficulties were the more formidable because they appeared to have behind them the lofty sanction of Divine Revelation.

Those anti-Christian and atheistic writers who, while they enthusiastically support and plead the cause either of extreme Liberalism or Socialism, nevertheless miss no opportunity of reviling the clergy and the Church of England, are yet apt to forget how much their cause owes to the steady inculcation upon the masses, by Protestantism and its representatives in England, of the doctrines above mentioned, *plus* the right of private judgment. And if now they find a ready, almost instinctive response to the subversive cries they so frequently raise, it is to four centuries of Chadband theology that they are indebted. It is no reply to this to point to the extreme Toryism of the Church of England, and to the obscurantism of religious bodies in general. It does not follow, as Mr. Arthur Ponsonby points out,¹ that because the Bishops are too inconsistent to exhort their lay brethren in the Upper House to sell all they have and give to the poor, those whom the Bishops and their clergy are responsible for teaching will therefore be equally inconsistent. And the fact remains that, while we acknowledge the Toryism of the Church as a fact, we still believe that the atheistic and anti-clerical preachers of extreme Liberal and Socialistic ideas are insufficiently grateful to Protestantism for the spade-work it has done for them in establishing their ideology in the minds of the people.

¹ See his *Religion and Politics*.

The reason why Protestantism makes the subversive elements in Christianity more difficult to deal with than Catholicism, is that Protestantism was in a sense a return to primitive Christianity, that is to say, to that form of religious belief which preceded the wise and worldly modifications which were made in early Christian doctrine by the Holy Catholic Church, often under the stress of imperative need.¹ The development of Catholic doctrine had been the work of interpreters who claimed that their interpretation was valid for all believers. But Protestantism overthrew Catholic interpretation and restored primitive Christianity to the faithful—that is to say, it restored to its followers the ideology which had been the only possession of the primitive Church. But, acting logically from its understanding of this ideology, the early Church had, as we know, been communistic. Small wonder then, that, as soon as the New Testament became once more the sole source of religious inspiration, the right of private judgment should have led to the same result as in the age preceding the complete establishment of Catholic doctrine.² Thus one of Wycliffe's tenets had been 'among Christians there ought to be a community of goods',³ and Wycliffe was one of the earliest of English Reformers. Even the revolutionary priest, John Ball, basing his

¹ As a single instance of this, let us recall the number of prohibitions of the practice of self-mutilation for holy ends which appear in the canons of the third century, and were calculated to discourage too literal an interpretation by the masses of the sex-phobia to be read in the New Testament, particularly in St. Paul's teaching. (On this point see my *Man: An Indictment*, Chapter X.)

² The fact that it also led to Puritanism is another proof of the relationship between Protestantism and primitive Christianity. For the extreme Puritanism of the faithful in the first four centuries of our era was amongst the most alarming consequences of the spread of Christianity.

³ James Gairdner (op. cit. p. 11).

position on the Scriptures, and not on the beliefs which the Catholic society of Europe had built up, asked: 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?' But although Protestantism certainly led back to the position of the primitive Christians, this is not to say that its universal effect was a sudden revival of communistic doctrine. This came, but later on. For such an immediate effect the body of influential Protestants were either too well off or too illogical. All that is maintained here is that it removed such tenets as the equality of men, the hostility to riches, the desirability of sacrificing the greater to the less, etc., from the strong and orderly framework of Catholic tradition and restraint, and from the rest of the Church's teaching, and by so doing rendered the subversiveness of these tenets very much more formidable. In Germany, as we know, Luther was branded more as a revolutionary than as a heretic, and he was accused of inaugurating reforms that would put an end to all order.¹

The immediate effect in Germany was, indeed, so terrifying that Luther himself turned against the wretched peasants whose contumacy he had helped to provoke with his megalomaniac doctrines. And, if the effects in England were not so serious, this must be ascribed, in the first place to the slower assimilation of ideas connected with the Protestant Reforms, and possibly, too, to that quality already mentioned, which, on its positive side, consists of character, and therefore of a good resisting front presented to novelty, and on its negative side a certain lack of logic in the English mind which prevents principles

¹ *Cambridge Modern History*. Vol. II. The Reformation, p. 166. 'In the Edict of Worms Luther had been branded rather as a revolutionary than as a heretic, and the burden of the complaints preferred against him by the Catholic humanists was that his methods of seeking a reformation would be fatal to all order, political or ecclesiastical.'

from being applied with extreme consistency.

Nevertheless, the possession of such doctrines as primitive Christianity offers, coupled with the right of private judgment, does not incline the English, or any other Protestant people, to political stability; least of all does it confirm them in their native and instinctive conservatism. It rather leads them to ever greater extremes of democratic restlessness, and the consequence is that, as has already been suggested, the Conservative cause in England cannot be said to find much support from the religious doctrines of its National Church. When we add to this the fact that the National Church itself is founded on the anarchical principle we have been discussing, and is in its own constitution an example of the chaos created by that principle, the position of the Conservative who feels himself traditionally compelled to support this Church, is, to say the least, a most unhappy one. He can only do his duty by his Church by shutting out from his mind all the realistic applications and relations of what he holds and beholds; and although his loyalty frequently enables him to do this with success, it is at the cost of his intellectual clarity and development. The notorious touchiness of English Conservatives on the subject of their religion may possibly be the outcome of the settled conviction at which they have arrived, that loyalty forbids their allowing too close a scrutiny into the consistency of their views; for, seeing that an opinion strongly held covets rather than resents attack, it is otherwise impossible to account for a sensitiveness on this score which must have struck every careful observer of English life.

Long ago Conservatives should have insisted on their Church establishing order at least within her own province. For only when that had been achieved could they consistently uphold her. Attempts to

effect this end have indeed been made, but only with partial success,¹ and it is significant that the last, which consisted of what is known as the Oxford Movement, ended with the secession of the leading Tractarian, Newman, to Catholicism. It is true that success in achieving uniformity of belief and ceremonial in the Church of England would never remove from the religion it preaches those subversive elements which have done, and continue to do, so much to support the extreme democratic and the communistic position. But it would at least strengthen the Conservative position. For to-day, when a Conservative professes to support his Church, he cannot possibly define what that Church believes or practises in regard to religion.

¹ The first Act of Uniformity in 1549 had as its object 'that the whole realm should have one use'. The second Act in 1552 had the same object, but added, in addition to certain alterations in the Prayer Book, provisions for the punishment of recusants and separatists. The third Act in 1559 made the new Prayer Book of 1559 the only legal service book, and also contained provisions for the punishment of recusants, as well as separatists. But in 1564, Cecil, reported to Elizabeth the terrible anarchy which again reigned in the Church, and in the hope of remedying this, without offending the Puritan Bishops, a minimum of observance was exacted by the Advertisements of 1566. As Archbishop of Canterbury (1633-1640) Laud made a further attempt to enforce order in the service. He enjoined the use of the surplice, kneeling at the reception of the Communion, the removal of the Holy Table from the body of the Church to the east end, and many other observances. But with the triumph of Puritanism anarchy again supervened. In 1662 a fourth Act of uniformity was passed, enforcing a revised Prayer Book upon the Church, and in 1644 the Coventicle Act, in 1665 the Five Mile Act, and in 1673 the Test Act, tended to impose the religion of the Church of England by statute upon the whole nation. But disorder even within the Church continued to be reborn as if by spontaneous generation, and all these acts had attempted rather to regulate forms of worship and ceremonial than articles of belief. For a brief and simple account of this aspect of Church History, see *An Introduction to the History of the Church of England*, by Henry Offley Wakeman, M.A.

It ought at least to be possible for each member of the Church of England to find similar guidance and direction, no matter to which of his priests or prelates he may turn. The present state of chaos is not only ridiculous, it is humiliating. A reform of the Church of England, in the sense of establishing precision and unanimity in regard to its doctrine and ritual, would therefore not only enhance the dignity of the Church, but also greatly increase the prestige of the Conservative Party. It is a need that is felt both by the congregation of the Church of England at large, and by almost every clerk in orders. And, seeing that it is desirable from the standpoint of expediency alone, for it would greatly increase the strength of the English Church against the Holy Catholic Church, which attracts and increases its power in this country precisely because it represents the solid granite of unaltering and undivided belief,¹ it is incomprehensible why the reform is not carried out with the greatest possible speed. No Conservative policy can be complete that does not include a reconstitution of the Church of England along the lines suggested. Otherwise, it seems inevitable that, within a measurable distance of time, the Conservative Party will feel the imperative necessity of securing greater sincerity for its own religious professions, by transferring its adherence to a body more in sympathy with the Tory principles of permanence, order, authority and subordination.

How the reform is to be achieved on the basis of the right of private judgment, it is difficult to say. Nor is it easy to suggest how the right of private judgment itself can now be jettisoned, seeing that it

¹ It would also increase the strength of the English Church against Nonconformity, from which at present it is distinguished only by the architectural style of its places of worship, the accent of its divines, and the Establishment.

constitutes the justification for the very schism which constitutes the Church of England.¹ But the problem cannot be insoluble, and, in any case, until it is solved, Tories and Conservatives, as supporters of the Church of England throughout their history, and at the same time defenders of authority, subordination and order, will continue to be in a gravely anomalous position, and bright audiences will still have to feel a certain compassion for the Conservative orator who is called upon to defend his Church as one of the pillars of the Constitution.

Merely to preserve the Church in its present condition, which was the implicit object of Disraeli's speech in the House of Commons on June 9th, 1863, and of his other speeches on the same subject in 1862 and 1864, is therefore not enough. It is true that he emphasised the need of avoiding internecine hostility,² and drew a terrifying picture of a Church without a precise creed, and a strict article, which he termed 'the title deeds of the laity to religion',³ and thus drew very near to recommending a condition of more seemly order in the house of the Church. But neither he nor the Conservatives as a whole seem to have held steadily before them the urgent need of reconstituting the Church on the basis of a more uniform confession,⁴

¹ This, as we know, is stoutly denied by a large section of the Church of England. But, whatever the truth may be about this matter, the fact remains that disorder in doctrine and ritual is now the great disgrace of that body, and it is difficult for a layman to understand why this is not corrected, unless the doctrine of the right of private judgment stands as an insuperable obstacle in the way. It would be interesting to hear what those who deny the schismatic nature of the Church of England, and therefore its foundation upon the right of private judgment, believe to be the real obstacle in the way of order and uniformity. ² *Selected Speeches*. Vol. II, p. 573.

³ *Selected Speeches*. Vol. II, pp. 606-608.

⁴ In his speech on Conservative Principles, indeed, in 1872, Disraeli so far from desiring a more uniform confession in the Church

and in this respect they failed to recognise what was in their own time, and should still be, one of the most important planks in the Conservative platform; for there are influences enough in the modern world, which conduce to unbelief, without the spectacle of an ecclesiastical body torn asunder by the discord among its own members.¹

It is among the chief duties of the Conservative Party to preserve what is termed the Constitution in Church and State, and we must now turn to that portion of their trust which is included under the latter heading. This consists of the Government of the country which is vested in the Sovereign and the two Houses of Parliament. The frequently vaunted prescience of the English nation which is supposed to have led to this ideal and composite character of the British Constitution, its forms and usages, must be regarded as mythical. Truth to tell, the triple-headed State was the outcome of a series of events and innovations, many of which have been due to no deliberation or forethought whatsoever. The stubborn resolve of one monarch to regard the Tories as his enemies, the inability of another to speak the English language, the profligacy of a third, the fluctuating power of either the nobility, the Church, or the people, the exigencies of fierce party strife, are the of England, applauded the existence of parties in the Church (*Selected Speeches*. Vol. II, p. 503); but in 1874 he certainly assisted Archbishop Tait in passing the Public Worship Regulation Act, which was directed against 'Ritualism'. The object of this act was no doubt mistaken, for it assumed a position which history did not justify. But although it was wrong and ultimately failed, its existence is a proof of how much the need of uniformity in the Church was felt at the time.

¹ For an interesting discussion, from a different standpoint, of the difficult position of Tories relative to the Church which they were pledged to uphold, see Keith Feiling (*op. cit.* Part III, Chapter XVII, pp. 489-493).

kind of influences which have done most to mould the Constitution into the form in which we now find it, and the chief contribution made to its nature by the English mind and character has been the gradual restriction of the power of each of its component parts.

The particularist character of Englishmen is essentially opposed to all strong centralised government. For that the native of this country is too independent and self-reliant. That is why, as I have shown elsewhere, it amounts to a slander of the English people to call England the Mother of Parliaments.¹ The very word denotes the foreign origin of the institution, and its first introduction into this country was the work of a foreigner. The fact that the earliest Parliaments were hated by everybody who had anything to do with them, and that it was only by the persevering exercise of the King's authority that they could be made to meet, is the best proof of this assertion.

When once Parliament was established, however, and the balance of power in the nation began to be a three-cornered fight between King, Lords and Commons, it was natural, and in keeping with the English character, that that part of the Government which had most power, the King, should be the first to be assailed. Englishmen, who throughout their history, have strongly suspected all the Governments of their day of being merely legalised tyranny, have always tended to regard with particular aversion that element in the Government which for better or for worse, enjoyed the greatest share of prerogatives, for there they have always felt the greatest villainy to reside.

The history of the monarchy in England, therefore,

¹ See *Man: An Indictment*. Chapter VIII.

with but brief spells of revived influence after the death of Charles I, is the history of a gradual curtailment of the power of the Sovereign, until with the advent of Victoria, the Crown became, as Disraeli said, a pageant. And, in this trimming of the royal prerogative, Tories have been quite as zealous as Whigs. It may be possible that a triangular balance is a romantic ideal, impossible of achievement, and that when once the Commons began to feel their power, as they did in Elizabeth's reign,¹ the Crown, as an effective factor in the Constitution, was doomed. But people continue to express a good deal of pride in regard to this triangular balance, as if it were still a reality, and the astonishing thing is that leading Conservatives have not ceased to speak very solemnly of the Crown as if it still represented an important part of the executive.

And yet there is all the difference in the world between the Constitution as a compound of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy, and this compound as we now find it. Its original pattern may, and certainly appears to have exemplified these components in full and active vigour. But it is useless now to argue as if its strength still lay in the possession of these components, for it no longer resembles its original pattern except in the retention of a few names, ceremonies, and formulæ. Even the present King's limited power to make war and peace, to pardon a

¹ The period of mediæval constitutionalism, which dated from 1404 to 1437, and during which the Commons acquired a strength they were not to recover for over two hundred years, should not be forgotten; but it was premature; it did not endure, and the acquisition of strength was really only continuous from the time of the Tudors. For an interesting discussion of the question see *Essays Introductory to the Study of English Constitutional History*. Edited by H. O. Wakeman, M.A., and Arthur Hassall, M.A. (London, 1896), Chapter V, by Arthur Hassall.

convicted criminal, to summon, prorogue and dissolve Parliament, to coin money, to confer nobility, and to assent or not to assent to a new law, is purely nominal.¹ He is a figurehead with social influence. The latter exhausts the whole of his power.

Thus there may be, and usually is, a good deal of humbug in a public speech supporting the Constitution, and when in the days before the Great War I used to pay occasional visits to that delightful old house in Pickering Place, which was the home of the 1900 Club, I was always conscious of feelings of acute discomfort when one of the noble members of the Club used to address us on the virtues of our Constitution. It always seemed to me that the part about the King suffered from an inherent feebleness, inevitable in the circumstances, and I remember on more than one occasion arguing the matter out with the late Lord Willoughby de Broke, in the hope of inducing him to say either much less or much more whenever he spoke on this subject.

To desire to preserve a Constitution, a portion of which is an undoubted sham, seemed to me incomprehensible. Nor is this merely a matter of opinion. For an essential part of the art of preservation is to protect from ignominy and contempt. Now how can a very high rank—the highest in fact—be protected from ignominy and contempt if it is treated with less consideration than that of an artillery bombardier? The officer, who gives a man a bombardier's stripe without at the same time adding to the responsibilities and functions which belonged to him as a private gunner, makes him the laughing-stock of the battery. Rank devoid of function and responsibility, no matter how thorough may be the artifices employed to

¹ No Sovereign has ventured to exercise the right of veto, that is, of withholding the royal assent, since 1707.

surround it with mystery and majesty, must in the end succumb to public contumely. To preserve rank, we must associate it with fitting functions and responsibilities. Except in a society of peacocks or Liberian negroes, rank has no other meaning.

To scoff at Disraeli, therefore, as many a Liberal writer has done, because he wished to increase the power of the Crown, is to confess oneself quite incapable of understanding what is meant by the duty of preserving the Crown as part of the Constitution. This is either desirable or not desirable. If, however, as an end it is desired, then the means of achieving it must be desired as well, and the Conservative is committed to the duty of increasing the present responsibilities of the Crown. For nothing else will achieve the object he has in view.

Continue to preserve the Crown for very much longer as a merely theatrical imitation of what was once the highest rank in the Kingdom (rank always being understood to have no meaning apart from function), and to withhold it from every function except that of leading fashionable society, and it requires no very marvellous gifts of prophecy to predict the Crown's complete demise in the proximate future. This is not merely possible, it is inevitable. And the more tasteful and intelligent the people of England become, the more inevitable this end will be. This unravelment may or may not be a good thing. But, if it is not a good thing—and Conservatives certainly ought not to consider it a good thing—then the Conservative Party is necessarily pledged to a revival of the functions and responsibilities of the King.

‘If you do this, however,’ cry the Liberals, ‘you must remove from the Crown its character of an hereditary office.’

To this there is but one reply: Let the Liberals study the subject of heredity a little more carefully than they have done hitherto, and then let the matter be discussed afresh.¹ Truth to tell, heredity is the only guarantee we have of anything human enduring beyond the period of a generation, and, when its principles are thoroughly understood, which they certainly never have been by any Liberal and Radical politician or writer, this objection will be seen to present no obstacle to increasing the power of the Crown. At all events, in the present state of our knowledge, it is no longer up-to-date or seasonable to regard heredity and its alleged vagaries as an objection either to a functioning throne or to a functioning peerage, and we therefore regard the hereditary principle in monarchy as no just ground for not increasing the functions and responsibilities of the Sovereign. Certainly, if the people but knew it—and they can be told—a functioning monarchy is the best guarantee they could have of their liberties. As a check on the other two elements in the Constitution it is indeed an essential feature of the government of the country; and when Charles I, in commenting on the Petition of Right, said ‘the King’s prerogative is to defend the people’s libertie’, he spoke not only as a sound constitutionalist, but also as an accurate historian.

The Conservative’s duty to preserve the Constitution, therefore involves the further duty of preserving the Crown; and the only means of achieving that end is to restore to it its functions and responsibilities. In the Whig and Liberal policy of preserving the

¹ For a full and detailed discussion of this subject in its relation to rulership see my *Defence of Aristocracy*. But since the publication of this book, science has brought many new facts to light, which make the case for heredity very much stronger than I have stated it.

Crown, while depriving it of its constitutional meaning, we have a further demonstration of the fantastic and romantic nature of this party's ideology.

Turning now to the House of Lords, we find that its position is such that, at the present moment, it is almost as much bereft of effective power as the Crown, and forms a much less essential part of the Constitution than it did even as late as the year 1910. Thus, in consequence of the Parliament Act of 1911, the Lords cannot now hold up any Money Bill for more than a month, and if at the end of that time they do not pass it unamended, the Bill becomes law after it has received the assent of the Crown. Any public bill other than a Money Bill becomes law without the Lords' consenting to it, if it is passed by the Commons and sent up to the Lords in three successive sessions; but two years must elapse between the second reading of the Bill in the Commons in the first session, and the passing of the Bill by the Lower House in the third session. Unless the Commons approve of them, all amendments made by the Lords in passing a Bill, amount to the rejection of that Bill.

It will be seen that these powers are exceedingly limited; so limited indeed, that one wonders what is now meant by the 'Constitution' in its composite character of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy; and, what is more, the lay student of history, who knows this extreme limitation of the Lords' powers which was effected by the Commons, cannot help wondering by what right one section of the executive could thus curtail and almost destroy the functional importance of another section.¹

¹ This would evidently have been the attitude of Nathaniel Bacon, the eminent lawyer of the seventeenth century, and the author of a sort of Constitutional history entitled *An Historical Discovery of the Uniformity of the Government of England* (1647). Addressing

It is not so long ago that Englishmen regarded the House of Lords as part of the bedrock of their Constitution; and certainly, if the Constitution meant anything in 1909, it is astonishing from every point of view that a Radical Bill passed in the House of Commons, and forced through the Lords in 1911 under a threat of creating peers, was sufficient to make it mean practically nothing except the activities of the Lower House.

When we remember, moreover, that all the machinery of the official Unionist organisation was utilised at the time in order to induce certain protesting Unionist peers to vote for the Bill which destroyed their own constitutional significance, history becomes mystery and our understanding confusion.

The Parliament Act of 1911 made the Commons the only effective element in the Constitution. In fact, with the King a mere figurehead, and the House of Lords a mere form, the Constitution as Montesquieu wrote about it, as Disraeli praised it, and as Continentals for two centuries have envied it, ceased to exist in 1911.

Unless, therefore, we are to continue to be led by the nose by mere words and symbols why talk about it? Why pretend to preserve or uphold it? What does the average Conservative mean when he speaks about the present Constitution? The late Lord Willoughby de Broke was at least consistent, for, when he used to refer rapturously to our Constitution, he spoke of it as something he remembered and wished to restore (at least as far as the House of Lords was concerned) to the form it had borne when he first became acquainted with it. He said that 'the

Richard Cromwell's Parliament in 1659, he said: 'Bicameral Government was the people's right: long usage hath so settled it, as acts of Parliament cannot alter it.' (See Keith Feiling. *Op. cit.* p. 33.)

repeal of the Parliament Act was the first duty of the Unionist Party when returned to power.'¹

I have already hinted in this chapter that the peaceable manner in which startling and often regrettable reforms are allowed to pass nowadays without violent or desperate opposition is not as creditable to the nation as it might appear. Behind it all there is a lethargy, an unwillingness to 'create bother', which is not the best of signs, although it has been the subject of much recent self-congratulation and applause. And the silent almost imperceptible decay which is going on all round, is more due to the indifference and boredom of nervous exhaustion than to the control of conscious restraint.

The peaceful revolution which marked the passage of the Parliament Act, therefore, and which left Englishmen more or less unperturbed, was nothing to be proud of, and the way the die-hard peers were abandoned to their fate by their own political friends is not the least ugly incident in recent history. The leaders who were responsible for this attitude seem completely to have forgotten that their chief ally in such disputes about principle is really the character of the population at large. Nothing is more genuinely appreciated by the English character than the ability to show a fighting spirit. And nothing, therefore, was better calculated to alienate sympathy and create contempt than the unaccountable weakness shown by the Lords in this struggle.

For much more was at stake than the prestige of a Liberal Government and the dignity of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. As a matter of fact, not only the Constitution, but Parliamentary government as well, lay in the balance. And seeing that, as a deliberative chamber, in which the highest ability

¹ *National Review*, October, 1911, p. 208.

and the best brains of the country were collected, the House of Lords far surpassed the Commons in the range and value of its criticism and in the independence¹ and experience of its members, its practical exclusion from the Legislature was a distinct loss, which will continue to make itself felt in our lives as long as something is not done to restore the conditions existing before 1911. I have no intention of repeating here the arguments I have already advanced elsewhere in favour of the aristocratic component in our Constitution. Suffice it to say that the representative character of the peers, their greater stability and responsibility, owing to their property and persistence as legislators in spite of changes in the Commons²; their peculiar position in the land, which when it consists, as it does to a great extent, of territorial influence, makes them men not only of trained administrative capacity, but also familiar with a very essential element in English life, which may be inadequately represented in the Commons; and, finally, the fact that their body attracts and draws to itself most of the leaders of outstanding ability in every department of the nation—all these qualities, quite apart from the constitutional need of an adequate Second Chamber, constitute the House of Lords an indispensable element in the Legislature, and one which has performed incalculably valuable services for the country throughout its history.

¹ This was increased after 1911, for, after that date, members of the House of Commons, in addition to depending as of yore on the caprice of the electorate, also received £400 a year in wages.

² This was relatively increased in 1911 because the Parliament Act, among other changes, also restricted the duration of Parliament from seven to five years, which meant that no member of the Commons, or Minister for that matter, need ever necessarily look more than five years ahead. Seven years had been the rule since the passing of the Septennial Act by the Whigs in 1717.

The same arguments that were advanced in regard to restoring function and responsibility to the Crown, apply in regard to the present position of the House of Lords; for, since an important and numerous body, like a great office, is certain to fall into disrepute if it is deprived of its functions and responsibilities, we may soon find ourselves reduced to our paid and largely venal House of Commons as the only remaining vestige of our Constitution and as the least desirable element in it.

To argue that the hereditary nature of the House of Lords made it effete and merely obstructive with the senile stubbornness of doddering old age, is simply to throw dust in the eyes of the ignorant. As I have shown in my *Defence of Aristocracy*, even if the charge based on the vice of hereditary power were valid, it is not candid to advance it as an objection to the House of Lords, which is so largely elective in character.

When we bear in mind that since 1760 over six hundred new peers (i.e. more than nine tenths of the whole House), and that since 1830 at least three quarters of the total members of the House of Lords have been created; when, moreover, we remember that there are twenty-four Bishops and forty-four Irish and Scottish peers, all elected, the hereditary character of the peerage begins to acquire less significance; and if incompetence and misrule are noticeable in it, these failings must surely be traced to some other source than to the alleged effeteness of its members, or the supposed evil consequences of inbreeding and the hereditary principle.

In my examination of the history of the peers of England, and of their influence on the life of the country, I did not by any means come to the conclusion either that they had been guiltless of the most

villainous abuses and the grossest blunders, or that their hereditary character was the worst feature about them¹; but if we are to proceed to destroy every institution in the realm which has not consistently maintained a standard of the highest efficiency and the loftiest wisdom, then by what right does the House of Commons itself remain standing?

It was a piece of fantastic arrogance on the part of the Liberal administration of 1911 to suppose that the Commons could dispense with the co-operation of the House of Lords in discharging its legislative duties, and by that one act it probably doomed the House of Commons itself to extinction.

But let us not in our censure of the Liberals before the Great War, entirely forget the hidden part the Tories played in helping to pass the Parliament Act, for politically and historically it is important. The Parliament Act was passed through the Lords under the threat of a wholesale creation of peers. Who, however, had been the first to use this weapon in party strife? It was Harley's Tory administration in 1711 which, in order to defeat an overwhelming hostile majority in the Lords, persuaded Queen Anne to create twelve new Tory peers. It is true that for nearly a century the Whigs expostulated against the unconstitutional nature of this use of the prerogative, but that did not prevent them from using the same weapon when the opportunity arose. And in 1832 it was only William IV's fear of the turmoil in the country that made him refuse to create fifty new Whig peers in order to carry the Reform Bill through the House of Lords.

The threat made by Mr. Asquith in 1910, therefore, was in pursuance of a Tory precedent. And, whatever

¹ See my *Defence of Aristocracy*, Chapters II, III, VI, VII and VIII.

the Tories might say against it—and very much was said—they could not condemn it as unconstitutional without denouncing the action of their own party in the reign of Anne. It is true that, like William IV, George V might have intimated his refusal to entertain Mr. Asquith's request. But, as we have seen, great changes had come over the monarchy meanwhile, and his inability to act in this way is an interesting instance of how the paralysis of the Crown may be an instrument for the destruction of the people's liberties, and the disintegration of our institutions.

As the result of a campaign of misrepresentation and the grossest abuse, in which, as most of us remember, Mr. Lloyd George surpassed himself, and in the course of which the Peers and Tories were falsely identified with the capitalists as the traditional oppressors of the people, and vulgarly vilified by thousands of glaring posters plastered all over the country, the Liberals in the General Election of January–February, 1910, were returned with a narrow majority of two over the Unionists; and, as the fight had been waged over Mr. Lloyd George's Finance Bill, which itself had led to the Parliament Act, it may be assumed that the result of the election led the King to conclude that the country was in favour of the Liberal policy, and that it would be unwise to follow the example of William IV. When, however, we remember the means by which that election was won, and the absurdly narrow majority the Liberals gained, we have, we must confess, some difficulty in sympathising with any scruples whatsoever which could have facilitated so momentous and undesirable an achievement as the destruction of the Constitution. It seems to us that had the lead of the die-hard peers been followed, a very different result might have been achieved. And it is impossible not to suspect that

neither the Unionist Party nor the country itself was at the moment sufficiently aware of the gravity of the situation.

But this is not the only respect in which Conservatives were implicated in the crime of 1911. They were also implicated (*a*) through the countenance their party had once given to that use of the royal prerogative, by which a hostile majority in the House of Lords could be swept away, and according to which we may say that the Lords' part in the Constitution had ceased to be vital ever since 1711; and (*b*) through their lack of political acumen and historical knowledge, which allowed them to look on more or less cowed and helpless while they were being identified with the Gradgrinds of the Liberal Party and the Whig chauffeurs of the Capitalistic Juggernaut whose car had flattened out the working-classes in the nineteenth century.

The contribution of the British public to this act of Vandalism, by which an essential limb of the Constitution was finally lopped off, was (*a*) their resolute ignorance of political affairs despite their boast of being the leading Parliamentary nation—an ignorance so profound that men like Lloyd George, who make it their business to keep a sort of desert chart of it, know exactly how far they can go in inflammatory hyperbole and in offensive slander of any minority in the community in order to achieve a political end¹; and (*b*) their only half-concealed

¹ One of the most convincing proofs of the shallowness of modern political parties and politicians was the speed with which Mr. Lloyd George's campaign of slander was forgiven and forgotten by the slandered during the late war. Such was the enthusiasm of all old and safely-placed people for a prolongation of the war at all costs, that the man who saw his best opportunity for power in meeting this wish of the stay-at-homes, completely won their hearts in spite of his previous unscrupulous vilification of them.

romanticism, which makes them always ready to flare up and to act with excitement and frenzy when words of such doubtful connotation as 'liberty', 'the good of the people', 'equality' and 'idle rich', are shouted loudly enough by dramatic little demagogues whether from Wales, Bengal or Glasgow.

There can be no doubt that the late Lord Willoughby de Broke was right when he said that 'the repeal of the Parliament Act was the first duty of the Unionist Party when returned to power'; and this is necessary, not so much as a means of restoring the Lords to their proper place in the Constitution, but now as a means of saving the House of Commons itself.¹ As a single chamber possessed of all power, the House of Commons is now as certainly doomed as were Charles I at the end of his spell of personal government, and the House of Lords after its rejection of Mr. Lloyd George's revolutionary Budget of 1909. For, as we have pointed out, the Englishman in his heart detests all government, and regards with particular aversion that portion of the legislature which, whether for better or for worse, appears to wield the most power.

If, therefore, Parliamentary institutions are worth preserving, and if, above all, we as Conservatives are any longer to uphold our Constitution, we are committed to two pressing and ineluctable duties. We must reconstitute the monarchy so as to make the Crown a functioning office with responsibilities, and we must restore to the House of Lords its effective

¹ The common objection raised by Liberals and revolutionaries to the effect that 'you cannot set the clock back' is claptrap. Did they not set the clock back when they voted themselves £400 a year in 1911? Members had not been paid since the seventeenth century, the last instance being about 1680. For a general discussion of the jejuneness of the argument based upon the impossibility of setting the clock back see my *Man's Descent from the Gods*, Chapter IX.

rôle in the legislature.¹ We cannot show our loyalty to the Throne more convincingly than by the first measure, because a responsible and functioning monarch would instantly make a deep appeal to the heart of the nation; and we cannot display more solicitude for the liberties of the people than by the second measure, because the evanescence of the House of Lords must mean not only the ultimate disappearance of the Commons, but meanwhile the absence of any check whatsoever on the power of the Caucus, and the so-called Prætorians of the party in power.

Turning now to the House of Commons, which, despite the light which has been thrown upon it by men like Belloc, Chesterton, Haynes, etc., still appears to many minds to be the stronghold of democratic control, we are again confronted by an institution which is also in many respects a sham. It is one of the most tragic circumstances of the Age that, whereas the Great War was fought to make the world 'safe for democracy', it is precisely democracy which to-day stands most discredited and most severely threatened with annihilation. In Russia, Italy, Greece and Spain, it is more or less defunct; in France it is openly detested, and no cultivated Frenchman considers it as any longer decent to be actively connected with the democratic institutions of his country. In Germany, where it is more or less of a novelty, it is rapidly losing its hold on the people, and becoming more and more the means and the instrument of a

¹ No steps taken to effect this end, however, can be considered satisfactory, which do not include some scheme for making the repetition of the action of 1711 and of the threat of 1832 and 1910 impossible. A certain section of the Whigs in 1717 tried to prevent the royal prerogative from ever again being used in this way, and the Conservatives must follow their example and this time try to carry the plan through successfully.

Jewish control of affairs. And these results, except perhaps in Russia, are largely to be ascribed to the corruption and degeneration of the popular assembly.

In England, the power of the Caucus, and of the party leaders over the body of the back-benchers in the House, to which reference has already been made, and the delusive character of the democratic control secured by Parliamentary representatives, have also greatly shaken the faith of the population in democratic institutions, and no class in the community feels its interests satisfactorily secured by the present organisation of our political life.

The middle and professional classes, which are badly organised for exerting political influence, find themselves constantly sacrificed for vote-catching purposes, without being able to raise any effective protest; and they share with inadequately organised industries the unhappy position of being able to oppose no united front to that part of the community which unites for purposes of political power. If representation were a reality this disadvantage should not be felt.¹

The working-classes long ago learnt this lesson, and the presence of Labour members in the House, originally supported out of Labour funds, is the best demonstration that could be found of the imperfect nature of the representation secured by the former 'Party' M.P. And even now, with their own

¹ Cf. *Life of Disraeli*. By Monypenny and Buckle. Vol. III, p. 38. 'In this age,' said Disraeli, 'it is not Parliament that does the real work. It does not govern Ireland, for example. If the manufacturers want to change a tariff, they form a commercial league, and they effect their purpose. It is the same with the abolition of slavery and all our great revolutions. Parliament has become as really insignificant as for two centuries it has kept the monarch.' As these words are to be found in *Tancred*, this means that the condition described above was already apparent in 1847.

members in the House, the exercise of so-called 'direct' action on a grander scale than ever, shows how even specially selected class representatives find it difficult to change a system. Thus the indifference of the wage earners to Lord Russell's abortive Reform Bills of the 'sixties, and their belief that their condition could be much more effectively bettered by means of Trade Unionism, seem, after almost sixty years of enfranchisement, to have been strangely prophetic. For, in spite of the many measures that have been carried since Disraeli's Reform Act of 1867, extending the franchise to every class of the community, strikes have steadily increased and have tended to become ever more and more serious. In fact, it would seem as if the proletariat's hope of achieving anything by means of influencing the legislature, were growing every year more feeble.¹ When we bear in mind that, in addition to the fact that we have manhood suffrage, the working-classes now have their own special representatives in Parliament, and that the number of these Labour M.P.s has increased from 2 in 1874 to 40 in 1910, to 62 in 1918, to 142 in

¹ Although the statistics of the years before the war do, on the whole, confirm this statement, there were of course periods of relative improvement, in which the strikes and the number of workpeople involved show a decided decrease. For instance, in 1899, the total strikes and lockouts numbered 719, with 138,057 workpeople directly involved, while the duration in working days was 2,516,416. There was a drop to 355 strikes in 1905, with 56,380 workpeople involved, and a duration of 1,484,220 days. Then, however, the rise was steady, until in 1913 the number of strikes became 1,459, the number of workpeople involved 516,037 and the duration in working days 9,805,000. After the outbreak of the war there was a steady rise from 672 strikes in 1915 with a duration of 2,920,000 working days, to 1,605 strikes in 1920 with a duration of 26,535,000 working days; whereupon there was a drop and the figures remained for five years more or less steadily in the region of 650 strikes a year with an average duration of 26,000,000 working days, until in 1926 there occurred the greatest strike in history.

1922, to 191 in 1923, and to 150 in 1924,¹ the increase of strikes alone, apart from any other indications we may observe, taken into consideration with the present paralysis of the House of Lords (which makes representation in the Commons much more powerful) seems to point at least to this conclusion, that the faith of the masses in Parliamentary Government and in the House of Commons as a representative assembly for the purpose of national legislation, is certainly not growing any stronger.

With the present isolated position of the Commons, as the only repository of legislative power in the nation, this attitude of popular suspicion and disfavour towards it is not likely to diminish, and unless something is done to restore both to Parliament and the Constitution the confidence of the people at large, it looks very much as if we must drift, like other nations, ever nearer and nearer to a dictatorship.

There are various influences directing modern England that way. The first and strongest of these is undoubtedly the discovery of the hollowness of the romantic ideals behind democratic theory, which tends to be revealed the moment the people begin to get into direct touch with the realities of State problems and State regulation. The great promised rewards of democratic control are then seen to be illusory, and the millennium prophesied by the idealistic philosophers and reformers of two centuries is known to be no nearer than it ever has been in the history of mankind. With the development of popular government, hard facts tend to be learned at first hand, and it is discovered that, after all, the inequality which is denied by democratic teachers is a very real and natural thing; that it does more than anything else to

¹ The figures for 1892 were 5; for 1895, 12; for 1900, 11; and for 1906, 52.

create difference of rank and of degree in prosperity; and that the happiness of mankind is not only relative, but that it is also more certainly secured by wise rulership exercised by mankind's best specimens, than by any amount of multiplication of the views and voices of the inexperienced, ungifted, and ordinary folk that form the majority of a nation (*Democratic Disillusionment*).

The influence that comes second in importance is the lesson, which apparently can also be taught to the masses only by experience, that political problems are after all highly specialised problems, and that the mass of the people, immersed in their own private and daily interests, cannot usefully apply their minds to the solution of such problems without either devoting much more time than they can spare to special studies, or complicating the problems themselves by inexpert and conflicting judgments. Thus the conclusion gradually arrived at, after all the noise of popular strife has died down, is that reached long ago by thinkers as widely divergent as Mencius and St. Thomas Aquinas, that the most a people can do in self-government is to assent to a body of rulers and not to a specific political programme or line of policy.¹ The fact that this involves the people's right to get rid of rulers who destroy or jeopardise their happiness, is granted by both Mencius and St. Thomas. Thus the utmost a people can usefully do is to acquiesce in rulers; they cannot choose rulers. The difference, though not glaring, is really very great. The first act is an act of judgment in terms of happiness, of which the simplest human being is capable. The second act is one which involves great knowledge and dis-

¹ This seems to be in keeping with Newman's view to the effect that the majority of men can usefully exercise their private judgment only in order to select teachers and guides.

cernment, such knowledge and discernment as cannot be given to everybody. Anyone by taking serious thought could have been able to foresee this conclusion, merely from a steady examination of the problem of government and the forces involved. But for a whole people to arrive at this conclusion, experience and direct contact with the realities of the problem of government were apparently necessary, particularly when such a people have been bred on the romantic and fantastic fictions of the Liberal and democratic ideology (*Limitations of a Democracy*).

The influence that comes third in importance, is the gradual recognition of the fact that representation on the basis of a programme or a policy (which is the present form) is much less desirable and much less conducive to a sound and protective system of government, than representation on the basis of a known and local relation of confidence to the representative chosen. I have no doubt myself that the latter was the original idea underlying Parliamentary representation, and the fact that in 1413, during the period of mediæval constitutionalism already mentioned, when the Government of England was both sound and wise, special notice was taken of this matter, and members of Parliament were obliged to reside at places they represented, points to the conclusion that, at this early date, it was the confidence of the electors in an individual known to them and recognised as knowledgeable in their local problems and requirements, and even sharing their interests and requirements, that made him their representative elect. And William Pitt the younger seems certainly to have held this view of the matter; for, on May 7th, 1783, in addressing the House on the Reform of Parliamentary Representation he let fall these significant words: 'The representation of the people could not be

perfect, nay, it could not be good, unless the interests of the representatives and the represented were the same; the moment they became different, from that moment the liberty of the people was in danger.'¹ Now it is obvious that to vote for a party man who frequently comes before his electorate for the first time when he makes his opening electioneering address, and who confronts them with a party programme of the greatest intricacy and difficulty, does not and cannot fulfil these conditions.

It may be objected that voting on a programme or on a definite policy—which is the rule to-day—secures the identity of interest between the represented and their representative. But, truth to tell, it does no such thing, because in the first place, voting on a programme or a policy presupposes knowledge and understanding which the electorate cannot possess, and secondly, the programme and policy frequently have nothing in them which necessarily binds the representative locally to his constituents. If, on the other hand, the representative is a local man, who has the confidence of his constituents, and who is chosen as their leader and representative, because he has shown himself articulate and intelligent and capable of defending their interests and his own *in any emergency*, they need not trouble to try to master problems which they cannot understand, but need only trust him to safeguard their interests and their happiness in a manner they could not possibly safeguard them themselves. Thus Parliamentary representation placed on a sound basis would lead back to a sort of aristocracy, in which the Lower House of representatives would be the best of the people, and the Upper House the highest in the land; and, in

¹ *The Speeches of the Rt. Hon. William Pitt* (3rd Ed., Vol. I, pp. 48-49).

that event, the representative of a district would feel it incumbent upon him to represent all the people in that district and not merely those by whom he had secured his seat.¹ (*The patriarchal element in sound democracy.*)

Whether it is possible so to reform the present representative system, as to achieve the desirable conditions hinted at above, may be a matter of the gravest doubt. If, however, Parliamentary institutions are to be saved, and it is desirable to save them, some such changes as are suggested in the above paragraphs will have to be seriously considered; for to allow the present system to continue will bring total discredit on the one remaining active limb of the Constitution, and then who can tell what will take its place?

The fact that the reforms suggested above involve the introduction of a more aristocratic organisation of our system of self-government, can only terrify those who are satisfied that democratic institutions have proved and are proving their worth. Seeing, however, that everything points if not to the present, at least to the very proximate total discredit of these institutions, we must resolutely set our face to some other solution of our national problem, and the first step to such a solution is to reform our House of Commons. To do this we must make it (*a*) more genuinely representative; (*b*) freer and more independent of party organisation; and (*c*) composed of men who are returned by their constituents as local men

¹ This also seems to have been the view of William Pitt the younger, for, in the same speech as that quoted above, he said his opinion was that 'the members once chosen and returned to Parliament, were, in effect, the representatives of the people at large, as well of those who did not vote at all, or who, having voted, gave their vote against them, as of those by whose suffrages they were actually in the House'. (Op. cit. p. 48.)

of confidence trusted to represent local interests in any contingency, rather than as men from nowhere who are merely pledged to vote on a certain programme, or in accordance with a certain policy, the merits of which their constituents cannot properly judge.

Finally, since we cannot restore the House of Commons to its former position in the Constitution without restoring the other constitutional components to theirs, we must regard its reform as inseparable from a programme which will provide for the increase of the responsibilities and functions of the Crown, and the reconstitution of the House of Lords on the basis of the *status quo* previous to 1911, and *minus* the Commons' right to use the royal prerogative as a coercive measure against it. Only thus can Conservatives hope to repair what damage has been done, and to preserve the identity of the nation. And, since the wrecking of our political institutions has not been directly the work of the Conservative Party, or of their ideology, they need be committed to no inconsistencies in restoring them to their original form.

Chapter VI¹

CONSERVATIVES AND THE PEOPLE

TWENTY years ago there was no compensation for diseases contracted through work, fifteen years ago no pensions for the aged, one year ago no pensions for widows and orphans. It is of course recognised that the progress in these matters has been great. But the men know that in many, perhaps in most cases, it has been won by their own efforts, often in the face of strong opposition. The progress is frequently regarded less as a cause for gratitude, than as a reason for believing that the hardships that still exist, and are represented as unavoidable, may be unnecessary and as open to remedy as those that have been abolished.²

This significant passage in a recent Government publication states in a nutshell the difficulty confronting politicians of what colour soever, in the country to-day. The working population have been left to do so much for themselves, and are so intensely conscious of their achievements that now they are inclined rather to continue to rely on their own efforts for the future than to look to any class, from which their former rulers have hailed, for either guidance or protection.

When the writer had occasion many years ago to

¹ The contents of this chapter have been drawn chiefly from two articles written by me for the *Fortnightly Review* (published in June, 1922, and April, 1923, respectively), entitled 'The Conservative Programme—A Suggestion', and 'The Conservative Programme—A Further Suggestion'.

² *Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry* (1925), Vol. I, p. 109.

discuss with three miners the respective merits of the different political systems of civilised mankind, and pointed out the grave objections to democratic control—the inadequate equipment of the majority for dealing with State problems, the lack of leisure and experience which constitutes one of the most serious disabilities of the masses for the task of mastering political questions,¹ and the confusion that is likely to arise from the act of handing so vast and complex an organisation as the British Empire over to popular control—the men cheerfully agreed that these objections were very sound, and they did not pretend to question their gravity. Nevertheless they declared that the general feeling among their fellows was that they could no longer trust anyone except themselves, and that ‘they preferred to go to the dogs in their own way, if necessary, rather than be beholden to anybody in the nation for guidance or direction’.

This attitude, regarded in the light of history, is comprehensible enough, and the principal political problem of the future is whether the confidence of the people can ever be redeemed by that section of the nation which hitherto has been loosely described as the governing class.

Before attempting to examine this problem more closely it will be interesting to give only one example of the kind of popular action which, in the past, has revealed to the ordinary people themselves the carelessness and incompetence of this governing class.

In 1854 the pitmen of Durham and Northumberland presented a petition to Parliament in which ‘they prayed for a law enacting that from 10 years of age till 14 no boy should work down the pit longer than six hours a day; that he or they may thereby be

¹ Not that it is maintained that the average politician of the leisured classes necessarily masters these questions.

enabled to go to school for the other part of the day, and thus extend and perfect the education previously got. They further petitioned that it should be compulsory on the owners of mines to build schools on their collieries, and stated that the petitioners would contribute from their earnings 2d. each weekly in support of such schools.¹

Now, it is surely obvious that, in a country where the working people themselves have been trained through the gross neglect of their rulers, to take action of this sort, confidence and respect must be seriously undermined; and when we learn, as we do, from the recent report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry, that the miners 'are well aware of the history of their industry. Through reading and through family tradition, abuses which have been remedied and which may be forgotten by others, are kept alive in the memory,'² we cannot wonder that an attitude of sullen distrust should have been adopted by the working-classes, and it is well to remember that it is much more the creation of their past rulers than of their own perversity.³

¹ *Report of Royal Commission on State of Popular Education in England*, 1861, p. 197.

² Page 108.

³ Another flagrant instance of neglected duty on the part of responsible people—whether Parliamentary representatives, the rural clergy or the agricultural landlords, or all three—which still persists is the present condition of the agricultural labourer. Why is it that, in spite of the many highly skilled duties he has to perform (I say 'highly skilled' in the sense that they are certainly more skilled than much of the work classed as 'skilled' that is done by members of effectively organised and protected trades) he is still classed as an unskilled labourer? Why is it that whereas his inferiors in skill in many trades are allowed to enjoy the benefits of the National Insurance Act of 1911 in regard to unemployment, he continues to be denied them? (See Schedule VI of the Act, and also its various amendments.) The reply of the agricultural labourer himself is that he does not belong to a powerful Union efficiently organised like that of the

There were three agencies in the country, all connected with the machinery of government, which before 1854 might have anticipated just such a petition as the one quoted above, and thereby secured the trust instead of provoking the distrust of the masses. There was first of all the peer or body of peers whose financial and landed interests lay in those quarters of the kingdom in which the miners worked. There was the Church, whose representatives were certainly on the spot. And there were the members of Parliament for the district. Had each of these agencies discharged only the minimum of its obligations to the community, they would collectively have secured what now it is very much more difficult to secure—namely, the confidence of the workers. When we remember, however, that the first Mines' Act of 1842 was passed 'in spite of the coldness of the Government, the Peers, and even the Church',¹ we know why these agencies failed.

This is only one instance. It would be possible to quote hundreds more from the pages of existing Parliamentary papers dealing with industry. That is why we cannot too strongly deprecate the tendency, too general in the so-called 'Capitalist' press and certain sections of the so-called 'Capitalist' classes to-day, of always suspecting influence from Moscow, Transport Workers and Miners. But from the Conservative and patriarchal standpoint, and from the standpoint of an ideal representative government, the real reply is that those who pretend to protect his interests, and to watch over his welfare—the Members of Parliament for rural and agricultural districts, the clergy of these same districts, and the agricultural landlords, whether noble or otherwise, who draw their tithes and rents largely from his labours—have failed to make his grievances known, have failed, in fact, to forestall his own independent agitation, and therefore have failed to secure his confidence and loyalty for many generations to come.

¹ See page 126 ante.

Russian gold, or the machinations of Bolshevik agents behind the disaffection and unrest which has been so common in the masses for close on a generation.¹

It cannot be repeated too often, or too emphatically, that the present purely native force of proletarian distrust and suspicion, is abundantly adequate to account for every one of the symptoms that are too lightly and too easily ascribed to foreign and particularly to Russian agencies; and those sections of the press and of the governing classes, who are prone to refer to Bolshevistic interference as a sufficient cause of popular disaffection, simply hold themselves up to ridicule before the eyes of the people, who on this point are better informed. In order to assume such a position towards industrial unrest, a man must be not only ignorant of history, but also of the psychology of the people with whom he is dealing. Russian gold and Russian influence may now be accompanying and alarming symptoms of industrial unrest, but they are by no means its cause, and it would exist without them.

If now we deny—and the present writer in various treatises has taken some pains to deny—the ability of the masses to govern, guide, protect and direct themselves, with any hope of preserving the identity of the nation, the existence of the Empire, and even the general level of prosperity and happiness enjoyed at the present day, the question arises how can their confidence be regained in such a way as to induce them to abandon the desire for self-government, and

¹ The fact that Russian gold and Bolshevistic propaganda both attempt to play a part in English industrial disputes at the present day cannot of course be denied, because both have been caught, as it were, red-handed. But the mistake is to regard such influences as anything more than external and confirmatory to native causes in the industrial populations themselves, which are quite sufficient, without Russian gold or influence, to account for all the trouble.

allow some party in the nation to come forward as their champion while at the same time maintaining that attitude of vigilance, ability and understanding towards those other questions of State, which the government of the vast Empire requires.

It will now be attempted to offer a few answers to this difficult question. But it is not pretended that all of them are equally valuable or helpful, or that their practical application will immediately achieve the desired result. It is only hoped that their statement may act as a stimulus and clue to a wider and better solution.

In the first place, then, it is suggested that the Conservative Party is the only party that can, through its traditions and principles, logically shoulder the burden of this undertaking—not so much because its history is free from any participation in the blunders which have created the present situation; for we are unfortunately too well aware that this is not the case; but because its fundamental position, as described in the opening chapters, constitute it the only party that has the necessary philosophic outlook for attaining to the desired goal, and because among many mistakes in the past, it has at least upheld a higher standard than any other party in caring for the welfare of the people and the permanence of the nation's greatness.

The line of cleavage in English politics is not, as many suppose, between the possessing classes and the working-classes. And gratuitously to label these classes as representing Law and Order on the one hand and Socialism and Revolution on the other, is an insult to the working-man. Historically, the line of cleavage in English politics is between the Tories plus the people on the one hand, and the Liberals plus the manufacturers, the big traders, and the exploiters of the people on the other. Mr. Churchill's

division of society into those who stand for Capital and those who stand for Socialism to-day, is, therefore, inaccurate, particularly, as when he announced it, he drew the unjustifiable conclusion that the political fight of the future would be between a coalition of Conservatives and Liberals on the one hand, and Labour on the other. A year or two ago it was forgotten by many Conservatives, who were ready to argue with him, that he spoke as a Liberal and not as a Conservative; for, in spite of his defection to the Tory side, it is evident that he still thinks and feels as if he belonged to the Liberal camp.

As I have already pointed out, Conservatism is not to be allotted in this way to a horizontal stratum of the community, although Liberalism certainly may be. Large sections of the working-classes in this country are still Conservatives. They still have the pride of country and of race, although we may have done our best to shake them free of both; and it is these working-class elements in the nation which, together with the Tories, should form the opponents of the Liberal and Socialistic party.

Besides no good can come of thus opposing an unbroken front of prejudice and hostility to Socialism. Socialism represents only a body of ideas, and the way to fight ideas is not to present to them an unbroken front of stubborn opposition, but to oppose to them another body of ideas, better solutions and better and nobler prospects than they can promise. Ideas are not fought with machine guns, but with intellectual weapons. To slay those who advocate them, merely makes them breed faster. If Socialism is right in its ideas, by all means let us have it. If it is wrong—and we believe it is wholly wrong—then we must offer better solutions.

Our reason for placing the Liberals and Socialists

together is that, after all, they are united by their common birth in Romanticism, and by their common unconcern regarding such realistic needs as character, personal freedom, and independence among the masses. And the similarity of their position has best been shown in recent years by the fact that Liberalism has lost its power by moving so very far to the Left as to have allowed itself no retreat in the event of a truly Socialistic Party coming into being. In order with some colourable warrant to be able to pilfer the ideological storehouse of Fabianism, which has been its mainstay for the last twenty-six years—ever since the Boer War in fact—Liberalism committed itself to a policy essentially Socialistic. But, given a group that was prepared to champion Socialistic policy with more logical consistency than the Liberals—given, that is to say, a frankly Socialistic Party, which would take Liberal experiments with Fabianism in its stride—and Liberalism was sure to be superseded. Now the Left Wing of the Labour Party is precisely such a group. They could not take long to eclipse and supplant the timid pretenders whose only claim to the Socialistic credo consisted in the disguises they had repeatedly filched from the Fabian wardrobe; and the consequence is that Liberalism has suddenly found itself without a policy, and in fact without any *raison d'être* whatsoever.

It is, therefore, in the present impotence of Liberalism that we find the best demonstration of the claim that the Liberals and Socialists are allies; and the fact that *Truth* predicted only the other day that Mr. Lloyd George will ultimately join the official Socialist Party is further evidence favouring the same conclusion.

The line of cleavage in English politics cannot, therefore, lie between Capitalism and Socialism. It

lies between the Tories *plus* the people on the one hand, and the Liberals and Socialists of all classes *plus* the exploiters of Labour on the other. For that Socialists are exploiters of the people, whatever they may say to the contrary, is clearly to be read from their doctrines. They simply stand for a more machine-like organisation of an industrial community. They rob the people not only of their belongings but also of their character. The general strike of May, 1926, revealed better than anything else could have done, the power of the Conservative elements in the working population. For what appears ultimately to have been decisive in driving the T.U.C. to surrender, was not the alleged threat that the Trade Union leaders were to be arrested, but the melting away of the T.U.C. forces owing to the defection of the instinctive or unconscious Conservatives in the masses.

Thus, if any party is to reconstitute itself the leaders of the people, the Conservative Party is the one that is indicated, and the only difficulty before us is to devise a policy which will help to recover the popular faith that has been largely sacrificed, and without which no party can possibly lead. It is now for the Conservative Party, therefore, to discover in what directions they must seek for conditions which, while they bear oppressively on the nation as a whole, call for high qualities of statesmanship for their modification or removal.

It is suggested here that there are five such possible directions, in none of which the people at large can be expected to effect any useful reforms by their own unaided efforts. There is, apart from the constitutional or other reforms already recommended, which lie peculiarly within the province of Conservatism: (1) The Health of the Nation; (2) the Education of the masses; (3) the Question of Over-population;

(4) the need of checking Urbanisation and promoting Agriculture; and (5) the procuring of some Economic Security for wage earners.

(1) The conditions prevailing among the majority of the population, both as to their food and its preparation, are incredibly bad. Few people have any idea how bad they are. A mere glance at them would provide matter enough for a dozen chapters, and the supply of milk alone would afford ample opportunities for beneficent and valuable reform. During several sojourns in Dorset, for instance, the writer has been appalled by the condition of things, not only in the supply of milk, but also in its scientific treatment before being despatched to the consumer. The fact that the total deaths from tuberculosis in Dorset are twice as great in proportion to the population, as they are in Kent, Sussex and Devonshire, where the same conditions do not prevail, is probably only one aspect of this problem. Indeed, this disparity has for a long time been occupying the attention of the municipal authorities all over the county, and yet nothing appears to have been done or attempted in this department by the Ministry of Health. Rich as the county is in pasturage, it is impossible at the present moment, despite the herds of cows that abound, to obtain a pint of milk or a pound of butter that is really protective food against tuberculosis, unless a private source of supply is at hand. And the huge organisation for the supply of milk to big centres like Bournemouth and London, leaves but very few private sources of supply available.¹

The abuse of tinned food and proprietary foods is so common in rural districts throughout England that at the present moment, in the southern counties, with

¹ The milk conditions in Dorset were described in intimate detail by the writer in his novel, *The Taming of Don Juan* (1924).

which the writer is specially familiar, the health conditions of the population may be said to be very much worse than those of large urban centres.¹ When a rosy healthy child is encountered, it is usually found to be a visitor from London.

In the matter of bread also there is ample room for reforms of a drastic and far-reaching nature. It ought to be possible for every working-class woman to purchase a pure wheaten loaf at her local baker's. To-day, unless she is equipped with expert knowledge, she cannot do so, and even when she is so equipped she may find it difficult.

The question of the drink of the nation also urgently needs investigating. The fermented beverages sold are poor in quality, and owing to the manner of their preparation are devoid of protective properties.² Probably much of the dissatisfaction and misery of the proletariat is due, not so much to sordid conditions of life—for these are the first that cease to be noticed when they are habitual—but to the lack of that inner contentedness which is bound to supervene when the body obtains what it requires in food and drink. Many of us who have lived in circumstances very much more distressing than those of the poorest working-class family and who have retained our good spirits notwithstanding, can vouch for the fact that this inner contentedness is of far greater importance than the outward comfort secured by the appointments and surroundings of the home.

There is also vast scope for beneficent reform in

¹ This was already clearly noticed twenty years ago by various witnesses before the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration (1904). See the evidence of Sir John Gorst, Mrs. Close, Mr. Henry James, and Mr. G. H. Fosbroke, pp. 432, 118, 84 and 261.

² This is admitted by the *Medical Research Committee's Report on Vitamines* (1919). See p. 61.

the control of patent and proprietary foods. Not only the poor, but the whole of the lower middle and working-classes, are constantly being deluded by the assurance that a certain artificially preserved and commercial foodstuff is as good as its principal ingredient in the fresh and natural state, or that a certain tinned milk is as good as mother's milk or fresh cow's milk. These assurances are invariably commercial lies. If they ended only in undeserved profit to some one, there would be little to complain about; but since they constantly lay the foundation of adult debility in the child, and of disease in the adult, they constitute an abuse which requires prompt and drastic reform.

Now all these are matters about which the majority of the population can know nothing. They are unequipped to trace a good measure of their ill health, their chronic constipation, and their frequently stubborn debility, to the food they eat, and the beverages they drink. And since either the natural indolence, or the excessive labours of the women of the working classes in particular, incline them inevitably to the proprietary or preserved food, because it is as a rule more easily prepared and dished up than fresh food, they even prefer it, both for themselves and their families, before food in its natural state which requires more careful preparation. Thus it is not at all uncommon to find in lower middle class and working-class families at a time when greengrocers' stalls are cracking under the weight of fresh fruit of all kinds, the housewife providing tinned pears, tinned apricots, or tinned pineapple for her husband's and children's meal. These tinned products are more expensive than the fresh fruit in season, but they are easily dished up.

This ignorance, which leads to much bad health,

can be dissipated only in the following ways: by educating the masses on the subject of food where this is possible; by controlling much more severely than at present the preparation of bread and the supply of milk and drinks, and by regulating the proprietary and tinned food trade so as to prevent misleading advertisements and ensure that nothing injurious to the health, particularly of infants and children, is sold as if it were highly desirable food. As, however, powerful vested interests are here likely to be opposed, reform is sure to be difficult and tedious. We must remember that it is not so long ago that the proprietor of one of our largest proprietary foods, who was a member of Parliament, happened to be killed in an accident at Hyde Park Corner; but it would be fantastic to hope that the House of Commons could be cleared of all such people in this providential manner.

Furthermore the whole system of drilling young children and of teaching them physical exercises and violent games should be carefully and scientifically revised. The fact that it has been noticed that a large percentage of children deteriorate soon after they start going to school,¹ may not be unconnected with the misuse of themselves,² in exercise of all kinds, dances, and drilling, imposed by the school curriculum; and the teaching of exercises, drilling and dancing ought therefore to be examined from this standpoint.

¹ See the 1924 Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, where it is stated that the physique of numbers of children degenerates *while they are at school*, and Sir G. Newman's comment on this fact is as follows: 'It would seem that there must be conditions in the school as in our educational system which are favourable, or perhaps even produce, some of the physical effects which are found.'

² It is impossible to enter here into the explanation of this misuse of self. For a full treatment of this point I would refer the reader to my *Man: An Indictment*, Chapters X and XII.

The degeneracy of the present population of England as a whole is so appalling that the subject requires study from every standpoint. As I have collected a mass of data to prove that progressive physical deterioration is now taking place¹ on a prodigious scale in this country, I use the word degeneration in no shallow alarmist sense, and without any misunderstanding of its meaning or its gravity, for it is unfortunately an indisputable fact. And, since it leads to great misery, and to the imposition of many unnecessary and tiresome burdens on the sounder sections of the community, the party which has the courage to face it in all its monstrous hideousness and overcome it will earn the eternal gratitude of the nation.

(2) In the realm of education, too, how much could not be effected by beneficent reforms, undertaken with a clear grasp of the objects in view. It is too late now perhaps to place elementary education once more upon a voluntary footing and to restore to parents their financial responsibilities in this matter, no matter on how small a scale. But in any case the whole of the elementary education of the country badly needs modification. The curriculum ought everywhere to be ruthlessly cut down, and the fundamental and minimum requirements of a sound mental life given a very much more important place in the school programme.² The children of England ought at least to be taught English, their native tongue. It

¹ See my Chapter on the proofs of Progressive Physical Deterioration in *Man: An Indictment*.

² See my *False Assumptions of Democracy*, Chapter VI, where I have worked out in the minutest detail how the present curriculum of the Elementary Schools could be modified in order to allow for the reform I suggest. Very soon after publishing this book, the measures of reform outlined in this chapter were warmly recommended in two official publications.

is at once an ideal means of disciplining and training the mind, of clarifying thought, and of correcting vagueness and looseness of reasoning. It is an excellent preservative of native nobility of character, opening up, as it does, to the student the whole treasury of lofty thought and sentiment that the language contains. It is, moreover, an intellectual weapon against befoulment by false doctrine and other deleterious influences; it is an instrument of criticism that would save them at any moment, in any contingency, against the specious appeals of demagogues, agitators and corrupters of all kinds; and it is a means of lucid and logical communication without which no man can be said to be safe against misunderstanding or confusion. Above all—and this is its principal value to-day—a knowledge of English is essential to anyone who wishes to know how to listen accurately and how to ‘read’ accurately.

The danger of the present political situation is that we have an electorate, large sections of which do not know, and have never been taught their native language. Their English is the babble of babes, their vocabulary that of a Hottentot. This electorate does not know how to listen to words spoken, or how to read and understand words written. Such a statement will probably strike the reader as exaggeration. But, if he understands by the knowledge of a language, that ability to distinguish between words that have a definite and practical meaning and those which are susceptible of but the vaguest definition; if he also understands by the knowledge of a language the power to read and listen with some capacity for criticism, he will probably be more ready to agree. At present the bulk of the proletariat are at the mercy of the glib speaker and the glib writer, because they have not the equipment wherewith to check or

criticise him. It ought not to be forgotten that a large number of the mere words for which quite recently masses of modern Europeans are known to have sacrificed not only their homes, but also their lives, are of a kind the emotional appeal, and therefore the dynamic force of which, is out of all proportion greater than their intellectual meaning.

With an electorate composed largely of elements that do not even know their own language, in this sense, it is possible for a very Saviour of mankind to be set aside in favour of one who is unscrupulous and agile enough to exploit this ignorance for his own ends, or at least, to put it mildly, it is impossible to prosecute reforms which are insusceptible of being presented in the accepted 'stunt' or popular form. But what then becomes of any programme, however wise and however desirable, that a truly patriotic and honest party might wish to carry through? Suppose through its lack of tinselly sentiment and fair-booth phraseology it failed to 'make a hit' at the hustings? Should the party in question have to bow to the inevitable and relinquish its opportunity in favour of men better practised in the buffooneries of a 'revue'?

The Programme of any Conservative Party which does not wish to confine its work to what can be put into an attractive headline in the Daily Press, must give a prominent place to the reform of elementary education. The people must be taught their own language—whatever else may fail—if only with a view to equipping them with that ability to be clear about ideas and principles, and less dependent than they are at present upon decoy words, catch-phrases and claptrap.

(3) The question of over-population is one which urgently requires to be faced by a brave and resolute party, but it is not denied that it is a thorny one. As

it must sooner or later confront Labour politicians and Socialists as well, it cannot be considered as a matter of class bias or class hatred, and it ought to be discussed, and a solution of it should be found, entirely on non-party lines. A conference of parties might be called to deal with it, but certainly the Conservative and Labour parties might usefully consult about it together.

It does not appear to be sufficiently understood how heavily the evils of over-population press upon all alike in this country, hopelessly destroying much of the happiness, comfort and health of the present generation. No matter whether we examine the problem of housing, of food distribution and supply, of excessive urbanisation, of traffic difficulties, of nervous exhaustion, of unemployment, or even of insanity, we are always led back sooner or later to the fact that England is over-populated, and that all our efforts to overcome any difficulties connected with the problems just mentioned, can only amount to patchwork, so long as the fundamental problem—that of population—is not faced and dealt with.

Like most other problems, that of population can be approached from two standpoints. It can be dealt with quantitatively, and those practical means can be considered by which the size of the population can be adapted to the country's resources and needs, either by encouraging multiplication if it is insufficient, or by developing industry, relieving distress, and promoting emigration if it is excessive; or we may deal with it qualitatively, by contriving means whereby the efficiency of our people may be enhanced, and their energy spared and increased if they are inferior from the standpoint of human desirability.

Needless to say that, in practice, the two standpoints

merge to some extent one into the other. But, in view of the fact that they do indeed become one the moment it can be shown that a large proportion of a country's people are inferior from the standpoint of human desirability—for all undesirable members of a population appear as excessive in the light of a nation's weal—we can narrow down the whole question to one of quality if we are able to demonstrate (*a*) that a large proportion of the nation are indeed inferior as human material, and (*b*) that this large proportion creates many of the evils and difficulties which are apt to be ascribed to a mere excess in numbers.

The Malthusians, who, for over a century, have been calling attention to the evils of over-population, are, as a rule, summarily silenced with the reply that their whole standpoint is based upon error, and that there is no such evil as over-population. Their opponents argue that modern methods of food supply, in conjunction with the large tracts of virgin soil that still remain unexploited, allow for so vast an increase of human life that, if at any time food threatened to run short, the precise moment when this is likely to occur is still too far distant to be regarded as a present or pressing problem.

But to those who point to the still unpeopled areas of Australia, Canada and the Argentine, to the still unexplored resources of mineral wealth in many parts of the world, and who draw the inference that there is room for the indefinite expansion of the human race, Mr. Harold Cox, in a recent book,¹ replies wisely enough: 'That inference cannot be maintained. However great the still untouched resources of the earth may be, beyond question they are limited. Therefore, if the expansion of the human race con-

¹ *The Problem of Population* (Jonathan Cape).

tinues indefinitely, a time must come when man will find himself face to face with an empty cupboard. It is purposeless to argue that this prospect is remote.'¹

And to those Socialists and Communists who frequently pretend that their schemes will abolish all problems, including that of population, Mr. Cox points out very cogently that 'if the institution of private property were abolished, and all were entitled to draw according to their needs upon the common stock, to which all would contribute according to their capacity, then it would become apparent to everyone that a high birth rate was incompatible with a high standard of living'.²

Thus, after showing that emigration cannot possibly keep pace with the increase of population—for, while the Government scheme only allows for the removal of 80,000 persons a year, the increase in England and Wales for the year 1921 alone amounted to 390,000 (which figure represents the excess of births over deaths)—Mr. Cox can see no other remedy for the existing state of affairs than systematic and universal birth control, with a League of Low Birth Rate Nations to support and organise it.

Now, admirable and courageous as Mr. Cox's analysis is, not only do we fail to see in it any attempt to identify the qualitative and quantitative standpoints in the manner suggested above, but also we are bound to join issue with him on the remedy he suggests.

For unless those who advocate Birth Control take the view that the State has the right to determine who shall and who shall not have offspring—and we do not read this extreme standpoint in their works—all birth control depending upon the voluntary use of contraceptives must inevitably lead to racial suicide. And why is this so? Because, in the first place birth

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 35, 36.

² *Ibid.* p. 112. See also pp. 111, 119.

control is a precaution that naturally appeals to the more prudent, the more intelligent, the more self-denying and the more desirable sections of the population, and where it is encouraged and promoted, only the lowest and most undesirable sections will be left as unrestricted and unlimited breeders.

Secondly, it cannot be too emphatically repeated, that the law of heredity is such that even the most desirable parents may be unable to bring forth the best possible combination of each other's qualities in their children unless nature is allowed a wide range of trials, enabling her to effect the greatest possible number of permutations and combinations with the stock attributes. I understand that the advocates of Birth Control would be in favour of no one having more than three children, and that this rule should be applied all round.¹ But this would be fatal. Because even if parents were specially selected for breeding, *it is impossible to be certain that their best offspring will necessarily come among the earliest born.*

Advocates of Birth Control are too prone to forget that if the families of Charles Darwin, Wellington, Rembrandt, Nelson, Napoleon, Bacon, Boileau, and Joseph, had been contented with three children these eminent people would never have been born. And these are only a few names selected at random.

Birth Control applied all round, therefore, would obviously be most undesirable. We want the least possible number of children, dwindling to none at all, from the undesirable, and the maximum number from the desirable. Only in this way can nature and heredity be allowed to do their best work. Only in this way can humanity advance. The very lavishness of nature's provision in the matter of germ cells lends

¹ This is certainly true of the Malthusian Society, for I have consulted them on the matter.

colour to this contention. And thus a fair and equitable adjustment of the question, which would be suggested by believers in the equality of all men, and would culminate in three children as an ideal maximum for all families, would be highly disadvantageous not only for the race, but above all for human achievement and national progress.

What is wanted then is control on a differential basis, and the ideal maximum in a family made to depend upon the desirability or the reverse of the parents and their stock (a most 'unpleasant' measure, which no one nowadays would have the courage to carry through).

For these reasons alone, apart from many others, both psychological and physiological, into which it is impossible to enter here, we therefore disapprove of the remedy for over-population recommended by Mr. Harold Cox and the other advocates of birth control, including Marie Stopes and Dean Inge. And we suggest that, since voluntary birth control on a three-child basis all round is inadvisable, since emigration is inadequate, and since, moreover, at the present day we are witnessing an orgy of expenditure on public assistance which cannot well be exceeded,¹ we are driven to the only remaining alternative, which consists in approaching the matter merely from the qualitative or race-improvement standpoint.

The future of a nation is potential in the quality of every generation of its citizens. It is possible to reply: '*Après nous le déluge!*'; but it is precisely because our ancestors of the nineteenth century made this reply too often that we are now compelled to confront a situation which Mr. John Martin calls

¹ A writer in *The Spectator* estimates the expenditure at £225,000,000 per annum. See issue for February 3rd, 1923.

one 'of gathering complexity and danger'.¹

To those whose argument with the Malthusians still consists in a denial of the evils to which they say over-population leads, the modern investigator can retort: 'Yes, but can your claims in favour of unlimited populations be valid in regard to every kind of human life? *Can it ever be anything but an evil if every increase in population is to show more than a proportionate increase in degenerate beings?*'

The present state of degeneration in this country is appalling. Progressive physical deterioration is established, and has been established for a considerable time.² It surely cannot be a good thing to allow population to increase if its quality is bad.

Moreover, seeing that the burden of human incapacity and wreckage which has to be shouldered by each new generation rests quite as heavily on the hearty and sound among the masses as upon the more desirable members of the governing classes, and must, owing to centralised organisation, hamper the whole machinery of national endeavour more or less equally, the question is one which may be considered on a plane above all class rivalry and antagonism.

It must be obvious that any nation which, from generation to generation bears upon its shoulders the great mass of human degeneration and wreckage detailed in my book, *Man: An Indictment*, which absorbs its energies and its wealth, without yielding any corresponding benefit, must in the end show signs both of exhaustion and revolt. For when it is remembered that in the statistics that may be collected to prove degeneration, only the extreme cases are given, and by no means a complete picture of the

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1923, p. 48.

² For statistical and other proofs of this see my *Man: An Indictment*. Chapter VIII. The Proofs of Progressive Physical Deterioration.

general state of debility and inferior physique existing throughout the country, it will be seen that even among the remainder of the population, not referred to in the records consulted, there must exist a vast proportion of people who in hospitals, homes, work-house infirmaries, and private families, can hardly be regarded either as self-supporting or desirable.

When in January, 1921, for instance, there were 158,764 men, boys, women and girls unemployed in London, it should be observed that in addition to the 22,129 pauper lunatics in London asylums, and the 24,453 defective children on the roll of London schools, a vast and fluctuating mass of children and adults, with their thousand and one varieties of debility and chronic disability, were simultaneously making claims upon the resources of the metropolis, for which no one either in London, or elsewhere, obtained the smallest return.

It is difficult, and it would also be inaccurate, to disregard these heavy burdens in tracing the causes of trade depression and unemployment; and when we consider the imperative necessity of relieving the distress of the sound and able-bodied, and of continuing old age pensions to widows and orphans, and innumerable other forms of public assistance—ultimately unproductive or at any rate unavoidable—we are compelled to enquire what steps, if any, we may take to reduce the burden of our obligations in that direction which constitutes a dead loss to the nation as a whole.

The necessity of facing and dealing with the problem of degeneration is, therefore, both urgent and imperative, and it falls naturally within the province of Conservative policy to undertake this task, because Conservatives are primarily concerned with the preservation of the nation's identity. While the result may

be a reduction of the burdens that press heavily upon the nation's finances, and cramp the life of the sound and desirable, is the Conservative Party not also deeply concerned with the bearing such measures may have upon the future of the English race and ultimately of the Empire?

Can Conservatives with any pretence of sanity allow the multiplication of thoroughly undesirable human material to continue any longer unrestricted in the country? Must they wait until disaster is imminent before taking steps to avert it? Is it not possible that, by the elimination of degeneracy in all its forms, the desirable end—the reduction of population—may be achieved without the necessity of proceeding to such measures as the imposition of Birth Control as a practice upon the population as a whole? For we take this occasion of observing that, while emigration is inadequate as a means of relieving over-population, it is also a potent contributory cause of national deterioration. While the increase of degeneracy proceeds apace, emigration, by skimming off some of the cream of our population every year, adds to the influences which disturb the proper balance between the desirable and undesirable at home. A visit to the Emigration Department at Australia House, where the health conditions insisted upon in Australian immigrants can be examined, would alone suffice to convince any reader that, while quantitatively emigration may serve some minor purpose, qualitatively it can and must be both a dysgenic and degenerative measure.

Now the failure that has attended previous attempts to deal with the problem of population qualitatively has been largely due to the fact that those sections of the House of Commons which were strongly in favour of this method of approaching the difficulty

not only did not receive, but also did not enjoy, a sufficiently powerful backing from the people of the country. Public opinion has not yet been converted to the possibility of qualitative reforms in the population, nor is it deeply enough aware of their need. Indeed, it is so far from being aware of such reforms that vast numbers in the nation are, we feel sure, still ignorant of the fact that an attempt has been made to pass legislation through the House on these lines.

The first step, therefore, is to draw wider public attention to the possibility and urgent necessity of approaching our population problem from the qualitative standpoint.¹ Secondly, it should be borne in mind that the measures to be framed should have these two definite objects—they should aim at reducing and eliminating degenerate and undesirable stock, and they should protect existing sound and normal stocks from the chance of pollution and deterioration through misalliances and contact with decadent or polluted elements in the population.

At first those cases alone might be dealt with which, while they are not acute enough to find their way into asylums and homes, nevertheless constitute a threat to the race if allowed to multiply; and it might even be necessary to increase for one or two generations the expenditure on public assistance, in order to isolate and segregate large numbers of people certified to be half-witted or tainted with some kind of hereditary ailment, either of the eyes, ears, or general constitution, which would make the propagation of their kind undesirable.

To those who would start the cry that we who

¹ This task the present writer has long been engaged upon, and *Man: An Indictment* is only the last and most important of a long series of publications in which he has endeavoured to achieve this end.

advocate these measures had no pity, we should retort by asking where was their pity for the sound and desirable who are being unfairly oppressed by the burden, and gravely menaced in their health by the presence, of the human wreckage that surrounds them? Pity is surely an emotion whose virtue increases in proportion to the value of the object pitied. Our pity, therefore, is greater than theirs, for it goes to that limited section of the nation that is still whole and desirable.

Concurrently with these efforts, and usefully supplementing them, a vigorous attempt might be made to disseminate among the people a taste and a moral bias, which, based on the conclusion here advanced, would educate a large body of public opinion to regard all procreation of unsound and tainted offspring as despicable and revolting. To argue that this taste and moral bias are already present is worse than disingenuous. Neither among the poor nor among the rich is it at all customary nowadays to encounter any influence whatever approaching a sound check on the love impulses, proceeding from a wise discrimination of desirability in the mate. Here the reformer has practically a virgin field for his operations and the highest possible sanction for carrying them out.

No campaign of this kind, however, could possibly succeed which was not accompanied by a rigorous investigation of the thousand and one influences which, with our intensive urbanisation and other modern conditions, tend, apart from hereditary evils, to sow the seeds of debility and ill-health, in every fresh crop of human beings.

We have a Ministry of Health, which, so far, has accomplished hardly anything in this direction. But the lethargy shown by this department of Government cannot be wholly due to the bad will of the officials

themselves. It is far more likely that in these questions, as in the matter of the Bill for race-improvement, that failed in 1912, the official leaders of the nation find themselves inadequately, or at least too apathetically supported by the country. Nevertheless, the nation not unreasonably looks to the Ministry in question to take a stimulating lead in these matters, and when once the lead is given, it does not seem improbable that the growing feeling of the people will be in favour of a rigorous policy.

Conservatives, therefore, would do well to identify themselves with a sound and vigorous policy precisely on this question. The time is ripe. And it is not unlikely that they would be astonished by the enthusiastic support with which their proposals would now be met.

(4) Closely associated with any scheme for purging the population of its degenerate elements and for promoting the national health, are two objects which should always take a prominent place in every Conservative programme—the arrest of urbanisation, and the encouragement and development of agriculture. In view of the known evils of urbanisation, which have been sufficiently widely proclaimed, it is incredible that a large and inflated city like London, for instance, should be allowed to continue to spread like a cancer, north, south, east and west, swallowing up the countryside all round it, and increasing the area covered by streets of houses, gas-works, factories, etc. It is difficult, in view of what is at stake, to understand the indifference of the various Governments to this two-fold blight of modern England—the wanton destruction of green fields and lanes, and the spread of the urban cankers. Is England to become one long ugly succession of streets, full of ugly, toothless people, living on tinned food, tea, margarine and white bread?

One is inclined to cavil less at the growth of urban centres and their present unwieldly proportions, than at the absurd lack of any policy towards this question, which continues to be shown by our legislature. And if the masses of this country are to be saved from disaster in the future, drastic measures will need to be taken to arrest a trend which is as ruinous to their health as it is to their minds. It is in towns that the useless, functionless pauper is bred by the thousand. It is in towns that all touch with reality is lost and that sedition flourishes. It is in large cities that modern man suffers from the worst and most maddening consequences of over population. And yet this evil is allowed to increase *ad infinitum*.

No Conservative Party of the future can possibly remain indifferent to the pressing nature of this problem. Some policy will have to be framed in regard to it, and those who frame the policy will have to recognise that they are faced with a two-fold evil. It is not only the increase of population which is intolerable, but the concomittant reduction of rural areas, which accompanies every increase, however slight, of the present areas covered by bricks and mortar, paving stones, and macadam.

No policy framed to deal effectively with this evil, however, can be complete, which does not embody measures for promoting and encouraging agriculture, and if possible the luring of urban populations back to the occupations connected with that industry. Not only from the standpoint of self-support in matters of food, but also from the standpoint of the national physique and sanity, an extensive revival of agriculture is greatly to be recommended. The Protectionists, who opposed the repeal of the Corn Laws during the anti-Corn-Law agitations of the middle of the last century, made a strong point of the ill-health that

would be likely to result from a decline of the agricultural industry in this country, and in this sense their opposition was wholly justified. It ought to be the most urgent concern of all future Governments to find the ways and means of inducing large numbers of townsfolk to go back to the land, in order to take part in the agricultural revival that is here suggested, for such a reform appears to be inseparable from any scheme calculated to arrest urbanisation. The marvellous strides made by Germany since the war in providing for her own agricultural needs gives an example of what might be accomplished in this country by adopting modern methods of intensive cultivation. And, seeing that the Germans themselves, the leading reformers among whom I have consulted personally in the matter, are prepared to provide us not only with the means, but also with the system adapted to the special requirements of this country, there can be no reasonable ground for postponing any longer the measures necessary for the change. Apparently it would suit us best to start with a greatly intensified cultivation of pasture land together with a proportionate increase of cattle and dairy produce of all kinds, so that in a very short time we might become self-supporting in butter, cheese, cream, meat and all the by-products of the dairy farm. Although this would involve a number of extensive modifications in our present system of hedging and fencing fields and meadows,¹ the system might after a small outlay, which would soon be recovered, be introduced to-morrow. Not only would it make us self-supporting in dairy produce

Dr. Bueb, of the *Stickstoff Syndikat*, Berlin, whom I consulted on this matter in January, 1926, assured me that although these changes would be necessary, they could easily be effected, and indeed have been with perfect success in Germany.

and probably even capable of exporting butter and cheese of the highest quality, but it would also have the supreme advantage of attracting an enormous amount of labour to rural districts. I have had the scheme explained to me in detail, and I should be glad to describe it to any reader who happens to be interested, if he will communicate with me.

At all events, whether the idea I suggest, of beginning with an intensive cultivation of pasture land, is advisable or not, some sort of revival of agriculture seems to be very urgently needed, and Conservatives, whose traditions connect them chiefly with the land, should not fail to include this important object in any programme they may frame for future legislation.

(5) The need of obtaining some economic security for the great mass of people represented by the wage-earners of the nation, is the last but by no means the least important object which should be kept in view by any far-sighted Conservative Party, anxious to recover the confidence of the country. For it is quite obvious that this is the next great development of a sound civilisation.

As Mr. Noel Skelton observes, 'for the mass of the people, political and educational status have outstripped economic status'¹; and since this is a condition that cannot endure, and is indeed not enduring, it is incumbent upon the Conservative Party to pave the way for, and if possible establish, a new era in this connection.

The structure of our society has become unbalanced, because equality before the Law and equality in political power tend very soon to leave economic inequality in conspicuous and egregious prominence. When the two first privileges have been won, it is not likely that the third disparity will be calmly endured

¹ *Constructive Conservatism*, p. 17.

for long—not because to remove it is necessarily just, but because, as Aristotle pointed out: ‘those who aim at equality . . . if they see those whom they esteem their equals possess more than they do, will be ever ready for sedition.’¹ In this sense it is very much more cruel to proceed as we have proceeded—i.e. to make all men politically equal and equal before the Law, and to retain conspicuous inequalities in wealth, possessions and therefore power, than to follow the example of ancient societies and invariably to associate privilege with wealth and power. Seeing that the whole principle of equality is wrong, we do not necessarily approve of any result of its application. But, if it is admitted in regard to Law and political power, it obviously cannot long remain contested in regard to the power of wealth. Hence, of course, all those movements in ancient and modern society which are communistic in their nature, and which follow the establishment of political and legal equality.

It is, however, readily admitted by the most ignorant and covetous of agitators that economic equality is an impossibility. To make it possible for one second of time is the utmost that could be achieved. Sixty seconds later economic inequality would be re-established, and the old conditions would be restored.

This fact, however, undeniable as it is, will not prevent the occurrence of the sedition which Aristotle regards as inevitable in societies which, though based on political equality, yet reveal gross disparities of wealth. Indeed, we already behold the beginnings of this sedition about us to-day, hardly fifty years after the establishment of political equality.

It behoves us, therefore, to enquire in what way we can forestall sedition, by proceeding to measures which, though not directed towards the fantastic and

¹ *Politics*, V, 1302a.

unrealisable object of establishing economic equality, will, nevertheless, abolish the present indefensible system of having at the base of society, a great majority of the population without any property whatsoever.

That is why I suggest, and in my suggestion I agree with Mr. Noel Skelton, whose short treatise has already been quoted, that the most urgent need of all is to give some kind of economic security to the wage-earners. Mr. Noel Skelton says 'until our educated and politically-minded democracy has become predominantly a property-owning democracy, neither the national equilibrium nor the balance of the life of the individual will be restored.'¹

This is undeniable. And the granting of economic security to the majority of wage earners is more particularly desirable from a Conservative point of view, because not only will it greatly stabilize the nation, but it will also restore to the workers that independence, thrift and self-reliance which, until the Industrial Revolution, were always the principal and most coveted characteristics of the English people.

Gradually and step by step, the money which is now intercepted on its way to the pockets of the wage-earners, and spent for them in various works, many of which are wastefully and badly performed, and a large number of which would be unnecessary if the army of their sick, their degenerate, and their crippled, were reduced, must be devoted to securing higher wages, and ultimately to creating a property-owning working class, which will insist upon the right of responsibility and independence the moment their improved economic condition is experienced.

The fantastic experiment of keeping a class which, as far as this world's goods go, is certainly dispossessed, and of making it politically equal to the

¹ Op. cit. p. 17.

possessing class, is bound in the end to prove quite impracticable. To-morrow or the day after must inevitably bring the awakening and possibly the revolution. Nothing individuals can do can possibly avert it. But why wait for the culmination? Has not England and its Conservative Party been much too prone in the past to wait until circumstances drove them before they have taken action? Disraeli said: 'It requires a great disaster to command the attention of England.'¹ Yes, and have not the masses lost faith in their leaders precisely because there has hardly ever been originality and initiative, but always the imperative force of impending disaster behind the reforms that have taken place hitherto?

For this reform, however, there is yet time. Nothing points to the necessity of finding an immediate or prompt solution. And yet a solution must be found before long. Here there is a further opportunity for the Conservative Party of displaying that hypermetropic wisdom, which in politics is so rare that possibly only the Holy Catholic Church and a handful of European monarchs have ever exhibited it. Five preliminary steps will, however, be necessary before any practical attempts can be made to secure the end desired: (1) The working-classes must be protected from the alien poor, who will swoop down in their thousands the moment prosperity increases. (2) The working-classes must be protected from the burden and contamination of degeneracy. (3) The most stringent economies will have to be observed in every department of the Government, to reduce as far as possible the burden of taxation. (4) Steps will have to be taken to prevent waste of earnings among the poor themselves. (a) The custom of buying clothes

¹ Speech on Conservative Principles, April, 1872 (*Selected Speeches*, Vol. II, p. 525).

and other commodities through loan clubs, and so-called Providence Agencies, which exact exorbitant prices for articles merely on the strength of advancing a pound or two for a month, ought to be regulated and if possible swept away.¹ (b) The poor should be secured against the loss of lapsed insurance policies. Millions of pounds are collected by Insurance Companies from the poor every year. A goodly portion of this money is entirely lost to the poor, owing to the fact that the insecurity of their financial position frequently compels them to cease paying subscriptions. To allow the Insurance Companies to shovel all the proceeds from these lapsed policies into their tills is madness, and proves a great drain on the wage-earning class. (c) The poor should also be secured against the present inevitable extravagance of having to buy many commodities in minute quantities at a time, and therefore of being unable to lay in stores. Coal is an example of such a commodity. It has frequently to be bought by the poor in quantities not exceeding 28 lbs. to a cwt. And this means that they have to buy all through the winter at maximum prices. This disability applies to many other commodities. (d) The poor should also be protected against the gross disparity of prices prevailing in shops which are local and in unfashionable districts, and shops which cater for the rich. For instance, a certain large furnishing firm in the west end was supplying not long ago rugs at 18s. 6d., while in a Notting Dale slum the same article was being offered at 22s. 6d. This happens so frequently that it can only be ascribed to the fact that the local shopkeepers

¹ It is doubtful whether the so-called 'tally men' who carry on this business are obliged to register as money-lenders, but they certainly transact loans on a large scale, although they advance articles of clothing, gramophones, furniture and pictures instead of cash.

are aware of the dread which the poor have of dealing at the big shops. Enquiries I have made have led to the conclusion that the poor are not treated courteously in big shops. To mention names would be invidious. Seeing that this wastage of earnings all helps to impoverish the poor and to enrich middlemen who only take advantage of accidental circumstances which might easily be controlled, it is intolerable and scandalous, and ought not to be allowed to continue another day.

(5) Legislation will have to be introduced to protect the consumer and the producer from the parasitic, non-productive and very onerous profits of middlemen of all kinds. It is impossible here to deal with every aspect of this difficult question and to trace the ramifications of parasitism right through the supply and distribution of vital commodities in this country. But, if we consider coal alone, it is obvious that a major part of the difficulty of procuring (*a*) adequate wages for the miner, and (*b*) tolerable purchase prices for the consumer, is due to the perfectly gratuitous interposition of middlemen at every possible stage between the two. The fact that a ton of domestic coal costs 20s. at the pit head, and is sold at 50s. to the householder in London, is sufficient to show that something very serious is wrong, and it is our opinion that the Coal Commission took a very much too timid and moderate view of this aspect of the problem. It is not enough to say 'there do exist between producer and consumer substantial margins of profits or expenses, which might be narrowed to the advantage of one or other or both of them'.¹ It is not helpful to add: 'It ought to be possible either to reduce the price of coal to the consumer, or to raise it to the

¹ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry* (1925). Vol. I, p. 92.

colliery.’¹ This everybody knows. What is wanted is a determined and ruthless policy against the whole chain of middle-men who swallow up the bulk of the difference between pithead coal and coal delivered at a household in London. ‘The evidence shows,’ say the Commissioners, ‘that considerable saving is possible in the distribution of household coal.’² Let this saving be effected then, and the advantage of it will be felt both by the man at the coal face and the struggling householder in London. Whatever policy is adopted in regard to coal, however, ought strictly speaking to be applied to every other trade in England, particularly in the wholesale and retail food market; the supply and distribution of milk, eggs, flour and other elementary necessities, being wholly in the hands of endless chains of middle-men and Jews, who produce nothing and obstruct the flow of vital commodities by their unnecessary manipulation on the one hand, and by their control of prices on the other.

Thus, even before we proceed to organise means by which the wage-earners can acquire economic security equivalent to their political and educational privileges there is much that will be required to be done; and seeing that powerful vested interests will probably be met behind every abuse, the difficulties that will require to be overcome must not be minimised. But all these reforms, far reaching and complex as they are, cannot now be undertaken or thought out by the active politicians of any party. These men are much too busy and too greatly harassed for that. To-day the field is too vast, and the limelight of the executive stage is not favourable to the careful and profound study of any problem, however simple. Moreover, the active politician has neither the time, nor the peculiar gifts, which would qualify him for the part

¹ *Ibid.* p. 93.

² *Ibid.*

of a political innovator or discoverer on a grand scale. He may be an able exponent, a gifted advocate, he can hardly be a conscientious and painstaking thinker.

Henceforth, therefore, the road to success in politics must lie in the collaboration of active politicians with an unofficial body of men, related to the party, who know and who think, and who know because they study, and who think because they have the necessary peace and leisure.

The lesson to be learnt from the success of Liberalism from the time of the General Election of 1905 to the end of the Great War, is this, that at the present day a political party cannot survive that is not supported by an independent body of students and thinkers, from which it can obtain its ideas, its policies and its programme, as it were ready made.

In the case of Liberalism this thinking body was, of course, the Fabian Society. And although, by falling back on this storehouse of ideas, the Liberal Party ultimately wrecked itself, because it was compelled by its borrowings to move so much to the Left as to abandon its proper position altogether, the fact that it flourished for a while even on borrowed thought, proved what an immense advantage such an ideological background is to the theatre of active politics. If only that ideological background had been purely of Liberal manufacture, if only the men responsible for its creation had been inspired by the general faith and objective of the Liberal Party, and not by a faith and an objective which was very much more suitable to an extreme Labour group, we should still be able to behold a great Liberal Party in existence to-day, capable of asserting its independence against the Labour Party and the Conservatives.

What is true of Liberalism is also true of Conservatism. The weakness of the Conservative Party, ever

since the days when Matthew Arnold was hurling his invectives against it, has been the absence behind it of any thinking body, to which its active politicians could resort for enlightenment, guidance and ideas. No conclave of students, inspired by a strong Conservative faith or a vivid perception of Conservative aims has ever been formed behind the stage of Conservative politics. And to-day, all those Conservatives who, with the writer, feel that no better opportunity has ever before existed for a great constructive programme along Conservative lines, will, it is hoped give their support to the idea of forming just such a body as is here suggested.

The official Conservative Party, as represented by its old and even its younger figureheads, is as devoid of any constructive policy or programme as it ever was. It has nothing to oppose, except the resistance of self-interest, to the programme of reforms recommended by Labour. Of the ideas which could be used both for attack and defence, it is entirely guiltless. And yet there never was an Age which required more brilliance, more depth, and more courage, in its leaders, than the present. It teems with difficulties that demand solution, and with abuses that must be bravely fought. To scout the chance of a successful campaign now may be to lose the opportunity for ever.

Nevertheless, the framing of a Conservative policy to meet the needs of the Age, to correct the abuses that have not yet been tracked down, and to avert the disasters that threaten in the future, is not an impossible task, it is not even an undertaking demanding superlatively high genius. But it certainly depends on one condition, which, so far as can be judged, no Conservative leader, or member of the rank and file, has hitherto seriously contemplated, and that is the immediate formation of a body of men who will be

prepared and equipped to do for Tory politics what the Fabian Society has done for Socialism and the Labour Party.

Let it not be imagined for one moment that the only function of such a body would consist in restocking the intellectual arsenal of Toryism, although this would indeed be one of its principal aims. Like the Fabian Society, it would have wider duties to perform than the mere purveying of ideas. It would require to undertake that which is the direst need of modern times, both in England and in every quarter of the civilised world, and that is the re-education of public opinion in the matter of sound and realistic political and economic doctrine. For a hundred years and more now the world has been flooded with the literature of the parties that stand for social disintegration. No organised protest, no systematic and flat contradiction, supported by wise doctrine, has come from the other side, in spite of the fact that before such a systematic and flat contradiction, the disintegrating parties must collapse. All the weight, all the energy of argument and emotional appeal, has been on the side that desires disruption, or which is blindly pursuing a policy that will achieve it.

Thus in the field of public education alone, a body of students and thinkers, working along Conservative lines, would find more than enough scope for the exercise of its functions; and seeing that the ultimate constructive reforms, with which it would fill the Conservative programme, would be of little use unless the ground were prepared for their reception, it is probable that for some years (as in the case of the Fabian Society) this body would find itself engaged in little else than the re-education of public opinion.

Nothing but the totally unjustifiable self-confidence

of active politicians can possibly oppose the realisation of a scheme that would be so full of promise and hope for the Conservative Party, for the time is ripe, and to-morrow may be too late.

Chapter VII

WHY ONE SHOULD BE A CONSERVATIVE

BY no means the smallest part of patriotism is made up of pride, and pride can only be sustained by the consciousness of achievement. 'To make us love our country,' said Burke, 'our country ought to be lovely.'¹ He might have added, it must also be capable of great achievements. The past history of England, with all its wonderful achievements both in war, science, art and philosophy, has taught her people for many generations to associate a certain high standard of performance with everything truly English, and, pardonable as this element of patriotism is among people of more modest attainments, among the English it has much to justify it.

It cannot be denied, however, even by the most ardent English patriot that the great achievements of England, at least in the dramatic and spectacular stage of their existence, are now, and have been for some time, largely a matter of history. The late war is the last great act within living memory, and its value as a stimulus for patriotic feeling is largely marred by the fact that in it England performed a contributory rather than a solitary feat.

If, however, we turn our attention from what is dramatic and spectacular, to that which is still immense, although perhaps less noisy and less capable of immediately stirring the imagination, that which remains with Englishmen of all that they have achieved, ought, while it is still held, to prove a very substantial source of pride and a powerful stimulus to continued

¹ *Reflections.*

effort. And, seeing that the feat of holding and maintaining it still calls for qualities quite as great as those which have already been displayed, it is important to be quite clear concerning what is meant by England's heritage.

Stated in a single comprehensive term, this is the great Empire of which she is the vital centre. And this Empire, the most essential and most inspiring feature of modern England, supplies more than three quarters of the solemnity and splendour which are associated with her destiny.

Truth to tell, there have been of late years many influences at work, both in minimising its grandeur and in casting doubt upon its justice—so much so indeed that, at the present day, it is seldom that anything is heard which gives any idea of the enormous responsibilities and potentialities of England's present position. On the one hand the Empire has been the subject of vague and sentimental verbiage, often degenerating into claptrap, and on the other, of abuse based on the history of its acquisition, which has seriously discredited it among large sections of the public. Indeed, as a concept, it tends now to arouse so many conflicting emotions of pride, doubt, indignation and even shame, that it might perhaps be well, before considering the Conservative attitude towards it, to examine the precise weight of the arguments that are commonly advanced by those who wish to depreciate its greatness.

There are two principal schools of critics. There are the Socialists and extreme Liberals on the one side, who indignantly resent the idea that any group of people should ever become subject to another more powerful group, because they cannot suffer the thought of human inequality. And, on the other side, there are the latter-day moralists, who find it difficult to

reconcile with the conception of Christianity the fact that England's Empire should have been largely won by might.

The first group never miss an opportunity of exposing the enormities perpetrated by England in the acquirement of her colonies and dependencies, and the latter do their utmost to cover up the truth and their own sense of shame, either by arguing that the Empire was won when Englishmen were not fully awake to moral obligations, or by claiming that England's rule was always an advantage to the people who came under her power. Both groups speak with a sense of guilt, both would not mind very much if the Empire were to become disintegrated, and both are resolutely opposed to any further acquisition of territory.

Added to these two groups is a third and less influential group, consisting of people very much more reasonable than the first two, but also disposed to deprecate the existence of the Empire; who believe that conquest should always be justified by a superior culture; and that since a culture of manufacturies, smoke stacks, shoddy, and slums, cannot possibly be superior even to the lowest savage culture, any sort of violence which leads to the imposition of our smoke-stack civilisation on a people not previously familiar with its blessings, is an act of brutal vandalism and cosmic uglification.

It cannot be denied that the people advancing these various views have exercised an enormous amount of influence over recent public opinion; and the spirit which created them was carried, over thirty years ago, by the Nonconformist and Liberal elements in the nation, who formed the Little Englander Party, into the sphere of practical politics.

And yet the principles on which their standpoint

is based are wholly untenable. We will deal with them in their order.

In a limited area like that of the terrestrial globe, in which many different peoples wage a struggle for existence, and the nature of whose lives imposes expansion as a necessary consequence of health and vigour, it was inevitable that there should come a time when invasion and expropriation of territory should arise. In fact, if we are to believe the many accounts of man's prehistoric past, invasion and expropriation of territory seem never to have ceased ever since man first emerged from his wandering animal forebears.

If then it is impossible to subscribe to the principle of human equality, and of the equality of human races in particular, it seems clear that a superior race has a sort of natural mandate to spread at the cost of an inferior one.

To appreciate this contention, it may be as well to state two extreme cases—first of all to show the inequality of men on the one hand, and secondly the natural tendency in all healthy conditions to sacrifice the inferior, if sacrifice is demanded.

Let us suppose the existence of an isolated agricultural community, unable, except at intervals of six months, to communicate with the outside world. Furthermore, let us suppose that this community possesses one thatcher and twenty ploughmen, and that an act requires to be done which, while it involves the risk of life, is essential to the preservation of the community. It may be that a wild beast has to be killed in its lair, or that a treasure has to be rescued from a house which, owing to a recent landslide, now hangs in a perilous position over a cliff—or what not.

It is obvious that in selecting a man for the performance of the dangerous feat, the community will not light upon the thatcher. Why? Because he

cannot be spared. He is not equal to the ploughman. In the first place he is the master of a key industry, and he is the only master. He, therefore, ranks much higher than any of the twenty ploughmen; and, seeing that mortal risks are involved, the community refuses to allow him to endanger his life although he may be willing to do so. 'No,' they say, 'if any one must go, it shall be one of our twenty ploughmen.' Thus the thatcher, through his greater desirability, is preserved, and less desirable creatures are chosen for the chance of sacrifice. Apply this principle less extremely to any other community, or to the whole world, and it becomes clear that, however much you whittle down the differences of function and functional value, equality between men is impossible. And, as the reader will observe, no mention has here been made of special gifts, which are a further cause of distinction, and of difference in usefulness and desirability.

Thus the fundamental principle of inequality must make it right, where sacrifice is necessary, to sacrifice the inferior and not the superior.

Now, to take the second extreme case, let us look upon the whole world as a vast camp, in which, sooner or later, a shortage of food may occur. Let us suppose that this shortage is actually present, and that there is a fierce struggle for supremacy among the peoples of the world to obtain control of the food supplies.¹ If we are believers in the radical inequality of mankind, we see nothing strange or revolting in the spectacle of a superior people winning in such a

¹ It appears, according to some authorities, that this point may be reached in under 200 years from now, so that the hypothetical case is not so fantastic as it might seem. It has been estimated that the earth can maintain 6,000,000,000 inhabitants, a total which, at the present rate of increase, will be reached about 2,100 A.D.

struggle, and securing food for its women and children at the cost of an inferior population. On the contrary, from the standpoint of the world's future, we should regard it as most regrettable if they failed to do so. For by winning they would not only secure the continuance of the human species, *but also its perpetuation in the most desirable form.* But the believers in equality in such an extremity would be constrained to insist on universal quiescence, and presumably on universal restraint. They could not prevent the occurrence of deaths, because these would naturally follow from the shortage of food. Since, however, nobody would have any superior claims, all would have to go short, and everybody would have to be sacrificed. At this point, of course, the absurdity of the egalitarian view becomes obvious, because it must be quite plain to everybody that no such enmeshment would ever be possible. The reality of starvation would reveal the naked imbecility of the notion of equality, and one people would certainly take the lead in a fight for food. But from the moment the fight became engaged, inequalities would determine the issue.

To argue, therefore, that Empire is wrong because it conflicts with the principle of human equality is about as sensible as to say that War is wrong because it conflicts with the principle of human sphericity. In a limited area like the terrestrial globe, a superior race has the incontestable right to spread itself at the cost of inferior races. And until the moment when it becomes feeble and constipated, no community ever dreams of questioning that right. Nature and Life themselves give the mandate for such a procedure. Because, if in the line of human evolution, we are compelled to admit the supersession of a superior stock at each stage of advance, we are com-

mitted for further advancement to the same principle.

The argument against Empire from the standpoint of human equality is, therefore, claptrap. And to point to the many atrocities that have been committed in its acquisition, does not improve the logic of the egalitarian position. For war is never anything but a series of atrocities; invasion can never be pleasant for those who are invaded, and extermination can hardly be kind and humane.

Coming to the next group of objectors to Empire, who find it hard to reconcile Christian professions with the Imperialistic exertion of might to obtain right; or, to put it differently, who object to might being identified with right—these people are apparently so lacking in clarity that it is difficult to deal with them. And their position shows only too plainly how wholly we are led by the mere sound of words and not by the thought behind them.

If such objectors to Empire are democrats as well as professing Christians, which they almost always are, we may ask them on what grounds they regard a majority as right? Why does a majority have its way? How does it cause its right to prevail over other people's right? Have they any explanation to offer? Can they answer? They certainly acknowledge the right of majorities at all their private family gatherings, all their club, union, church or chapel meetings. They see the principle working at the polls, in the County Council, in Parliament, and in every assembly of men all over the world. Why? If might is not right, why should majorities be right? In the old days, we presume, controversies were always settled as they sometimes are now, by a fight. Experience of grazed heads and broken bones ultimately led mankind, therefore, to concede to the greatest number (those who had the might), the right,

without the unpleasant preliminary of a hand-to-hand contest, and thus acknowledged the fundamental principle that might is right. The fact that, as a rule, no fight is now required to establish this principle, does not alter its nature.¹

Even in popular agitations, through which the law is altered, we see the operation of the same principle. An act which a hundred years ago was wrong according to the law, becomes right in time owing to the fact that large numbers insist on its being right. This is true of combinations between workmen, public meetings and other practices now considered right.

To say that the principle that might is right is incompatible with Christianity may be quite sound. As I am not a Christian I will not venture to pronounce an opinion on this point. But, if it is sound, then it follows that democracy itself, Parliament, voting, whether at a Church Congress or at Wesleyan gatherings—everything, in fact, that is conducted on the majority principle, is thoroughly un-Christian.²

Such arguments do not bear examination, and those who advance them are so frequently inconsistent that they neither inspire respect nor repay attention.

¹ That this is not an individual point of view is shown by what Mr. Edward Jenks says on the subject. In discussing majorities and their power, he writes: 'And so it would appear that a fiction was gradually adopted, by which it was *assumed* that there had been a fight, and that one party had gained the victory. . . . And so it seems to have gradually become the custom, when party feeling was not very strong, to settle the matter by *counting heads* instead of *breaking them*.' (*A History of Politics*, p. 131.)

² The reader may object that there is one assembly of men which still resists the majority principle, and that it is one in which the supreme object is justice. The jury, of course, is what is meant. This is perfectly true. But it is well known that to dispense with the majority principle frequently leads to deadlocks, and to the necessity of a new trial. Hence the repeated enquiry of the judge addressed to both counsel, whether they will take a majority verdict. But in

But this is not all. After we have induced objectors reluctantly to admit that might is right, they will still argue, in order to appease their consciences, that, in spite of everything, the spread of England and of Christianity through might has been a blessing to the people whose territory has been invaded and expropriated for this purpose.

This is merely to add hypocrisy to the original crime of loose thinking. Far from her invasions having been for the good of the people whose territory was taken, whole masses of these people no longer remain. No descendant records their existence. The inhabitants of Canada, Australia and Tasmania have been almost wiped out. Moreover, even if they had not been wiped out, how could our interference with their normal lives and culture have been for their good? Our intention in first going among them was not to secure their welfare or to increase their happiness. The pioneers of Empire were much too honest to entertain any such hypocritical views. Our intention was to make some provision for the healthy expansion of our people, and secure their prosperity in trade and commerce. Why not admit it frankly, and justify it on the principle of human inequality? Sanctimoniously to ascribe pious motives to our robust and amoral pioneers of Empire, is to belittle them without doing the case for Empire any substantial good.

When we turn to the third objectors, we confess that we see more reason in their contention. From the standpoint of the world's future, it may be ques-

great issues, where the opposing sides consist of crowds, the object of whose clamour is not justice but victory, no deadlock can be tolerated. No judge is present who can order a new trial. And the consequence is that the jury system, which is perhaps the only just system, cannot be applied.

tionable (*a*) whether it is ever justifiable to impose an inferior culture upon a superior one by force of arms, and (*b*) whether the culture of industrial England is not inferior to that of the meanest of savage races.

To the first question we should certainly answer, 'No'. If we take for our ethical basis that the improvement or progress of the world as a whole should be our aim, then it is obvious there can be no ethical justification for imposing an inferior culture by force of arms upon a superior culture. We should, however, deny that, when the foundation of England's colonial greatness was built, from the reign of Elizabeth to the death of Charles II, her culture was inferior to any culture on earth. To the second question, we would reply that, whereas it cannot be maintained that the worst aspects of industrial England are in any case superior to the lowest savage culture, or that the unskilled loafer of our modern large towns, who can do nothing, is superior to the worst savage who can flake flints for weapons, and shoot straight at his prey, it should also not be forgotten that England's culture is a very much more mixed and highly complex one, and that comparisons between its lowest manifestations and the best manifestations of a low savage culture are hardly fair. Taken as a whole, it may rightly be said, that England's culture is superior to that of any people which she has practically exterminated; and that, with regard to the remainder, she can best justify her presence among them in the future by protecting them against worse influences than her own, and by helping them to develop the best that is in them under her tolerant dominion.

While, therefore, it may be denied that there is any moral wrong in the expansion of a healthy, flourishing and cultivated people, at the cost of inferior savages;

and while there is no doubt that the compatibility of Christianity with Empire cannot be questioned without questioning the compatibility of that religion with many another institution of great and honourable antiquity in our midst, we may nevertheless feel that, from the standpoint of the world's present weal, the existence of the Empire certainly does impose many very grave obligations upon us, which it would be both frivolous and despicable in us to neglect. And it is at this point that Conservatives may well begin to feel that the problem of Empire presents even graver responsibilities for the future than it has done in the past.

At all events, this much is certain, if the acquisition of the British Empire has been right, the Empire cannot now be abandoned without converting it into a wrong; and if it has been wrong, the best way to redeem that wrong, since it cannot now be undone, is to continue to administer the Empire in such a manner as to make it a boom and not a bane to the world at large. This, however, obviously cannot be done if it is not retained.

The very magnititude of the task which the preservation of the Empire imposes, therefore, places present England and Englishmen in a position unique in the history of the world. Never before have such powers for good or evil devolved upon a single nation, and, if the Empire is to be conserved, upon a single political party. Never before have so many millions of human beings been organised under one head.¹ And it is even conceivable that, to foreigners of every kind, and of every belief, the chance which the British Empire now offers, of linking up their efforts with the greatest 'going concern' ever known, constitutes one of the chief and most inspiring

¹ Their number is said to be 436,732,000.

attractions of British nationality.

Consequently, to allow the Empire to be disintegrated, would be tantamount to destroying it before its destiny had been achieved; it would be equivalent to leaving it as a mere *tour de force*, a mere display of skill, enterprise and adventure, which, though possibly the greatest in history, was nevertheless without meaning or purpose, immature and unconsummated.

To give it the highest possible sanction, therefore, it must be preserved. And the task of the future, very far from consisting of its piecemeal dismemberment, must consist of knitting it ever closer together.

As a means of national expansion, allowing for the preservation of national identity, the Empire is essentially the creation of a conscious or unconscious Conservatism in politics. For, although it began to find acceptance in the complex of Tory doctrine only at the time of George III's accession, and did not become a fully deliberate object of Conservative policy until late in the nineteenth century, reaching its zenith of enthusiastic support with the appearance of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in the Colonial Office in 1895, it is essentially a Tory conception, and belongs by nature to that portion of the Tory creed which compels attention to national expansion with unbroken unity.

The Liberals and Radicals, who have long been too deeply tainted with Little Englandism to be suspected of wishing to achieve the closer federation of the Empire, cannot be considered in regard to the Imperial responsibilities of the future; while the Labour Party, which is now, and is likely to be for some time, too thoroughly engrossed with domestic problems to be able to spare any energy in wider fields, is also not to be thought of in this connection. There is, moreover, among both Radical and Labour politicians, that

element of Jacobinism and Socialism which takes particular pleasure in the spectacle of rebellion or unrest in any of the dominions, and which never ceases to dilate upon the many horrors which the building of the Empire has entailed, and this attribute betrays their hostility to the whole concept of Imperial greatness or destiny.

If the grave responsibilities of Empire fall to any party in particular, therefore, it is the Conservatives who historically and by virtue of their principles and doctrine, are the rightful heirs of this sacred and yet heavy charge; and, if they only appreciate the immense possibilities of their heritage, there is no more powerful appeal for stirring the imagination of their supporters, and of the country at large. It is difficult to understand why the enthusiastic appeal of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has failed to be repeated by any of his successors; and what is even more incomprehensible is the fact that nothing seems to have been done, since his time, to attempt to realise his magnificent concept of a closely federated British Commonwealth of Nations.

Nowhere else, no matter where we turn, can we see the chance of linking up our energies with such a vast organisation, the course of which can be so surely deflected towards the salvation of mankind; and for this reason alone we desire the preservation of the Empire, and its survival in the midst of the other political entities of the world.

This is perhaps the chief sense in which one should be a Conservative, because it involves a great and lofty mission, and a task calling for the highest qualities with which the name of the Conservative Party is associated. If, however, we were challenged to specify more narrowly the reasons why every thoughtful man should be a Conservative to-day, we should answer as follows:

There never was an Age more saturated than the present is with every form of romantic fantasy and illusion. There never was an Age in which hard and cold realities required to be faced with more courage and resolution than they do to-day. The old antitheses, Romanticism and Classicism, stand opposed as ever, and the line of demarcation between them is still clear and well defined; but the forces of the former far outnumber those of the latter, and Classicism stands threatened with total defeat. Utopias, pregnant only with disillusionment and deception, have taken the place of rational and realistic expectations in the minds of millions of the population. Abstract words, having only fantastic connotations, unrelated in every sense to facts, now rule majorities as once only tyrants could. Principles utterly without foundation now draw the modern man into the streets to fight and to clamour, as if he actually bore some evident relation to life. And racial degeneration which makes men prone to harbour feverish fancies and whims and will-o'-the-wisps, complicates the situation and increases its gravity.

Nothing so clear and tangible as a class struggle threatens, because ill-health and its hallucinations exist in every class just as do the rare vestiges of health and sanity. Neither is the struggle one against Socialism and Communism, because these are only small divisions in the vast army of fantastic doctrines, which claim their supporters in every rank of society. A great disaster would certainly bring all these aberrant elements sharply to their senses, and dissipate their morbid dreams. But a great disaster would be destructive of much that is precious as well, and to allow ourselves to drift into it might therefore postpone the sane reconstitution of society *sine die*.

It behoves all men, therefore, who wish before it is

too late to arrest the process of national decay and decomposition, to add their strength to that party which, though its actual forces are small (its forces on paper must not be allowed to deceive), represents the only realistic and classical resistance there is to all the mumko-jumko of Liberal, Communistic, International, Utopian and other Romantic persuasions, the last stand that can be made against that garish phantasmagoria which, more like a nightmare than a creation of usefulness, has made 'Progress' only a mirage, 'Liberty' only a meaningless name, and the 'People' the wretched cuckold, the deluded spouse, of a wanton and dissipated political philosophy.

We want air, pure air, and sanity introduced into our national councils, for much that requires to be done will demand the utmost clarity and the keenest vision in those who undertake to direct the course of the future. It would be impossible to preserve the nation—not to mention the world—if the present debauchery of modern and romantic ideas were allowed to continue. And if preservation is really our aim, and the identity of the nation still appeals to our imagination; if, moreover, we do not think that the greatest societies of the past were wrong in exalting discipline above dissoluteness, authority and subordination above anarchy, order and quality above chaos and mere quantity, and progress above indiscriminate movement and change, then we are committed to Conservatism and the principles on which it is based. For in this sense only is Conservatism a desirable and fructifying creed.

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